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Handley Cross

Mr. J. C. HARRIS



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HANDLEY

CROSS

OR

Mr. Jorrocks's Hunt

Illustrated

With 17 Hand-Coloured Engravings

and many Woodcuts by

JOHN LEECH

VOLUME I

London

Bradbury, Agnew, & Co. Ltd., Bouverie Street

HANDLEY CROSS. OR M^r JORROCK'S HUNT.

BY The Author of
*M^r Sponge's Sporting
Tour &c. &c.*



with
illustrations
by John Leach

BRADBURY, AGNEW, & CO. L.D.,
PRINTERS,
LONDON AND TONBRIDGE.

TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE LORD JOHN SCOTT
ONE OF THE BEST OF BRITISH SPORTSMEN

This Volume is Inscribed

BY HIS
OBLIGED AND FAITHFUL SERVANT

THE AUTHOR

PREFACE.

MR. JORROCKS having for many years maintained his popularity, it is hoped that, with the aid of the illustrations, he is now destined for longevity.

The Author, in the present edition, not being tied to space or quantity, has had a better opportunity of developing his sporting hero than before.

The reader will have the kindness to bear in mind, that the work merely professes to be a tale, and does not aspire to the dignity of a novel.

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(*Hand-Coloured.*)

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HANDLEY CROSS;

OR,

MR. JORROCKS'S HUNT.

CHAPTER I.

THE OLDEN TIMES.

"I respect hunting in whatever shape it appears; it is a manly and a wholesome exercise, and seems by nature designed to be the amusement of the Briton"—BECKFORD.



"Trencher-fed!"

HEN Michael Hardey died, great was the difficulty in the Vale of Sheepwash to devise how the farmers' hunt was to be carried on. Michael, a venerable sportsman of the old school, had long been at the head of affairs, and without paying all expenses, had enjoyed an uninterrupted sway over the pack and country.

The hounds at first were of that primitive sort upon

which modern sportsmen look down with contempt. Few in number, uneven in size, and ill-matched in speed, they were

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stand lost in admiration at the doings of their favourites down below, while the more active follow in their wake, trusting to a check to let them in. When a check ensued, how bipeds and quadrupeds worked! While the latter were sniffing about, going over the same ground half a dozen times, the former would call their hounds to them, and either by pricking or lifting over difficult ground contrive to give them a lead. The hunt is up again, and away they all go. The hounds strain over the grass, dash through the furze, making the spinney resound with their cry, and enter upon the fallow beyond. Mountain alone speaks to the scent, and hills re-echo his voice.—Now he's silent.—She's squatted.

The prickers are at work again, trying each furrow, and taking the rigs across. How close she lies!

* * * * *

"*Hoop!*" She jumps up in the middle of the pack, and Mountain gets a mouthful of fur. That was a close shave!—too close to be pleasant. The hill people view her, and now every move of puss and the pack is eagerly watched. "That's right! that's right! over the stubble. Tipler's just going her very line. Ah, he's taken up the hedge instead of down, and Mountain has it. Now, Mountain, my man!"

She runs round the sheep, but Mountain hits her off beyond. Now she doubles and springs back, but they work through the problem, and again puss has nothing to trust to but her speed. Her strength begins to fail. She makes a grand effort, and again leaves her pursuers in the lurch. Slow and sure they ring her funeral knell after her, each note striking terror into her breast as she pricks her long ears and sits listening.

She nears her own haunt but dare not enter. The hill people descend to join the tussle at the end. Poor puss! her large bright eyes are ready to start out of her head. Her clean brown fur is clotted and begrimed, and her strength is all but exhausted. Another view!

"Poor is the triumph o'er the timid hare."

Now what a noise of men and hounds as they view her again.

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It is a last chance. She passes into the next grass field, and a friendly hedge conceals her from their view. She steals up the furrow, and reaches the wall at the high end. It is high and loose, and a few stones are out in the middle. Puss jumps in.

* * * * *

Up come the hounds. Mountain and Tipler, and Gamester, and Bonnets-o'-blue, Merryman, and Ferryman, and then a long tail, yelping, yapping, puffing, and blowing.

Over they go into the lane. Now up, now down, now backwards, now forwards, now round about, but no puss.

* * * * *

Up come the field. "Now, Mountain, my man, hit her off!" cries his master, vaulting over the wall, and stooping to prick the hare on the road. But no prints are there.

"She must have flown!" observes one.

"Or sunk into the ground," says another.

"Or yon tinker man's knocked her on the head," observes a third, pointing to a gipsy camp at the cross roads, and away they all go to demand the body of puss.

* * * * *

The tinker man shows fight on having his cauldron searched, and several stout wenches emerging from the tattered cart awning, a battle royal ensues, and further attention is completely diverted from puss.

"Well done, puss!"

To proceed—

The next step in the Handley Cross Hunt was getting a boy to collect the hounds before hunting.

They lay wide, and sometimes Mountain's master couldn't come, consequently, Mountain was not there; sometimes Tipler's master was absent, and the pack lost the services of Tipler's unerring nose.

Next, some of the farmers began to ride. At first they came out with young horses, just to let them *see* hounds—then, as the horses got older, they thought they might as well

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work them till they sold them, and at last it ended in their riding as a matter of course. Foremost among the riders was Michael Hardey. He had always been a great promoter of the hunt, breeding his hounds as he did his horses, for speed and substance. Some used to say they were *rayther* too swift for a hare. Others, however, followed his example, and in course of time the heavy towing harriers were converted into quick and dashing hounds.

Time rolled on, and Michael at length became looked upon as the master or manager of the pack. Having been always more addicted to fox than to hare, he had infused a spirit into the country which ended in making the wily animal their quarry.

The hounds were still kept at walks during the summer, but Michael fitted up a kennel at his farm to which they were brought towards the autumn. Peter, the pedestrian huntsman, was taken into Michael's service, clothed and mounted.

Of course all this was done by subscription. Some gave Michael cash, some gave him corn, some hay, others straw, and all the old horses in the country found their way to his farm.

They were then called fox-hounds.

The first day of the first season, after their metamorphosis, the hounds met at Handley Cross—the Godfather of our work. It was a pretty village, standing on a gentle eminence, about the middle of the Vale of Sheepwash, a rich grazing district, full of rural beauties, and renowned for the honest independence of its inhabitants. Neither factory nor foundry disturbed its morals or its quietude—steam and railroads were equally unknown. The clear curl of white smoke, that rose from its cottage chimneys, denoted the consumption of forest wood, with which the outskirts of the vale abounded. It was a nice clean country. The hazel grew with an eel-like skin, and the spiry larch shot up in a cane-coloured shoot. Wild roses filled the hedges, and fragrant woodbine clambered everywhere. Handley Cross was a picturesque spot: it commanded an almost uninterrupted view over the whole vale. Far to the north the lofty Gayhurst hills formed a soft and sublime outline, while the rich vale stretched out, dotted with village spires, and brightened with

HANDLEY CROSS

winding silvery streams, closed in on either side with dark streaks of woodland tracts. To the south, it stretched away to the sea. Handley Cross was a simple, unpretending village; the white-washed, thatched-roofed cottages formed a straggling square, round a village green, in the centre of which, encircled with time-honoured firs, on a flight of rude stone steps, stood the village cross, the scene of country hirings. Basket-making was the trade of the inhabitants; a healthy and prosperous one, if the looks of its followers, and the vine-clad and rose-covered fronts of the cottages might be taken as an index. It had but one public-house—the sign of the Fox and Grapes, and that was little frequented—had it been otherwise, there would most likely have been two.

Thither our master brought his hounds the first day of the season in which they professedly began to hunt foxes. It was a day of interest in the vale, and people gathered from afar. The morning was beautifully fine, with a slight tinge of frost on the ground, that half an hour's sunshine would dissolve. A little before eight, the foot-people on the steps of the Cross descried Michael crossing the vale by a line of hand-gates from his house—the hounds clustered round his horse, and Peter bringing up the rear. On they came at an easy, steady pace, and then the tall hedges below concealed them from their view; presently they rose the hill, and entered the village green. "The hounds! the hounds!" cried the children, and away they rushed from the Cross to meet them.

Some of the hounds threw their tongues with delight, as they jumped and fawned on the hands that had fed them; Climbank met his master, and rushed to him with joy, while the honest fellow felt in his pocket for the accustomed crust. "Come-by-Chance" recognised his mistress, and nearly threw her down with the vehemence of his salute. All was cheerful and bright—Michael's black horse pawed the ground, and whinnied with delight, as the hounds bayed him, or leapt against his sides. His master had paid a little extra attention to his toilette that morning; his well-brushed broad-brimmed hat pressed gently on his close-lying nut-brown curls, his whiskers were newly

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trimmed, and he had evidently had a keen-edged razor to shave with; health was on his brow, and a good-natured smile hovered o'er his swarthy face, displaying the brightness of his eyes and the whiteness and regularity of his teeth. Michael was then about forty; but for the fulness of his limbs one might have taken something off. The elements had rather hardened than sharpened the features of his face. He stood six feet high, with an amazing expanse of chest, and well-proportioned limbs. His hunting costume consisted of a good nut-brown coat, almost matching his complexion, a scrupulously clean white neck-cloth, with a large flap-pocketed red waistcoat, patent cord breeches, and mahogany-coloured top-boots. His undress, or home costume, was the same, with drab gaiters instead of boots; and his full, or evening costume, ditto, without the gaiters. A twisted hunting-horn was slung across his shoulder, and he rode with a spare stirrup-leather round his horse's neck. This coal-black steed was an animal of amazing speed and power—nearly thorough-bred, with a light, well set on head, clean flat legs, immense loins and hocks; he stood nearly sixteen hands, though the shortness of his tail made him look somewhat bigger; he was rising seven years old, and that was his first regular season. Peter was dressed like his master—coat, waistcoat, and breeches off the same web, and rode a wiry-looking bay mare, with white hind-legs. He was then about thirty, short, light, and active, barely turning nine stone—Michael weighed fourteen.

Horsemen now began to arrive through the various openings among the cottages on the green. First came James Fairlamb, with his merry round face shining with the morning sun—he rode a crop-eared cob with a roman nose; his dress consisted of a single-breasted plum-coloured coat, with large silver buttons, black boots, and white lambswool stockings drawn over his knees. Stephen Dumpling, the Doctor, appeared at the door of the only four-windowed house on the green, followed by his maid with a foaming tankard. The contents being disposed of, he mounted his dun pony, and joined the group. He was dressed in orthodox black, with powder, and a pigtail,

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drab shorts, and top-boots. The plot thickened—they came by twos and threes. Peter Jewitt and Harry Jones; two Smiths and a Brown, then another Jewitt, then another Jones; Morgan Hains, and John Thomas; next a horse-breaker; after him, Mr. Giles, the brewer, followed by the Exciseman, on a mule; then Mr. Smith, the overseer, and Miss Fidget's young man with the letter-bag, a mole-catcher, and a gamekeeper.

All his comrades having come, Michael looked at his large silver hunting-watch, and seeing it was half-past eight, prepared for throwing off. The couples were taken off the young hounds, master and man cocked forward their legs and tightened their girths, and then turned their horses' heads for the south, amid a chorus of delight from the hounds and the ill-suppressed cheers of the field.

A hazel copse or two were tried just for the sake of the chance, and on they trotted to a warm lying cover of gorse, or brushwood, formed by the junction of two hills. Jolly-boy, Boniface, and Dexterous, feathered as they approached the spot, and the former dashing in with a whimper and a long-drawn howl, Michael took off his broad-brimmed, low-crowned hat, and waving in the pack, cheered them to the echo. His horse pricked his ears, and whinnied with delight, and could scarcely be brought to stand with his head towards the cover as Michael stood erect in his stirrups, with one hand on the cantrel of his saddle, and the other holding his whip and reins, while his eagle-eye roved over every part of the dell. "*Have at him there, my jewel!*" cried he to old Bonny-bell—a favourite white bitch that lived with him, and could scarcely ever be persuaded to quit his horse's heels,—as she stood whining, lifting a foot, and looking him earnestly in the face;—" *Have at him there, my old lass!*" re-echoed he, looking down upon her, and waving his right hand, to induce her to join cry. The old bitch dashed in, and the chorus increased. The gorse was close, or the hounds must have chopped the fox, for he had made two efforts to break up hill so as to fly for the woodland country, and had twice been driven from his point by Michael's voice and the crack of his whip. A momentary silence ensued,



FIRST DAY OF THE SEASON.

HANDLEY CROSS.

as they over-ran the scent, and Michael had just cried, "Look out, Peter!" to his whipper-in, who was stationed on the opposite hill, when the fox dashed over a piece of stone wall between two large ash trees in the high hedge at the bottom of the cover, and with a whisk of his brush, set his head straight down the vale, crossing over a large grazing ground of at least a hundred acres. "Silence!" cried Michael, holding up his hand to the foot-people, who were congregated on the hill, as he turned his horse short, and galloped to the point at which the fox broke away, where, with a twang of his bugle, he presently had the old hounds at his heels, and hat in hand he waved them over the wall. Jolly-boy feathered for a second on the grass, and then with a long-protracted howl, as if to draw his brethren to the spot, he went away with his head in the air, followed by Dexterous, Countryman, Bonny-bell, and True-boy, and after them went the body of the pack.

"*Gone away!*" cried Michael, "gone away! tally-ho! tally-ho! tally-ho!"

"Get away, hounds! get away!" halloed Peter, cracking his whip as he trotted down the steep hill; and putting his bay mare straight at the fence at the bottom, went crash through it, with a noise that resembled the outbursting of a fire in a straw-yard. Then came the rush: the black threw the stone wall behind him, as a girl would her skipping-rope; and James Fairlamb's cob came floundering after, bringing down the coping stones, with a rattle and clatter that would have been awful if hounds had not been running. The third man was the Doctor on the dun, who made it still lower; and after him came Peter Jewitt and John Jones (the latter leading over), and impeding the progress of John Thomas, the other Jewitt, the other Jones, Morgan Hains, the overseer, and the parish-clerk of Welford, who all kept holloaing and swearing away—as obstructed gentlemen in a hurry generally do. The foot-people, seeing how hopeless was the case, stood upon the hills, lost in mute astonishment, eyeing Michael on his black, careering over the meadows and hedges in a straight line with the pack, followed by Peter on his bay, and Fairlamb on his cob, until

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the plum-coloured coat of the latter assumed the hue of the others, and hounds, horses, and men grew

“Small by degrees, and beautifully less.”

“*Gently!*” cried Michael, as the black horse bounded over the fifteenth fence, with all the dash and vigour with which he had cleared the wall, and the hounds threw up upon a fallow, the first check they had come to. “Yon way!” cried a countryman on a bean-stack, who had headed the fox, extending his arm like a telegraph; “to the left, past the hurdles.” “*Let them alone!*” cried Michael, “*let them alone!* Jolly-boy has it down the furrow; hoic to Jolly-boy! hoic!” and a wave of his hat brought the pack forward, and away they go full cry, making the welkin ring with the music of their deep-toned notes.

——“A cry more tuneable
Was never holloa’d to, nor cheer’d by horn!”

Forward they press; and Conqueror usurps the place of Jolly-boy. Poor dog, nature must not be denied, and age has slackened the vigour of his limbs! But they come to slow hunting, and the old hound’s unerring nose keeps the pack upon the line. The ground is stained with sheep, which, scampering in a half circle as the fox went past, complete the ring now that they hear the hounds. Michael pulls up, Peter is at his side, Fairlamb is in the next field—crack goes a rail, and the Roman-nosed cob is over, and the doctor’s dun comes up just as Michael puts his finger in his ear, and screeches the pack forward to old Bonny-bell, who speaks to the villain under the gate. It is a rotten old thing upon one hinge, formed of at least twenty spars and rails, all rattling and jingling out of concert, and is fastened with hazel-bands and pieces of knotted rope. Michael’s ponderous iron-headed whip breaks through them at a blow, and, thrusting the remains back with his right leg, he passes through and enters the open common beyond the vale. They are now upon the downs! all is brightness and space; Handley Cross appears like a speck in the distance, rendered visible only by the dark firs on the Green, and the vale looks like a web of green cloth stretched out behind.

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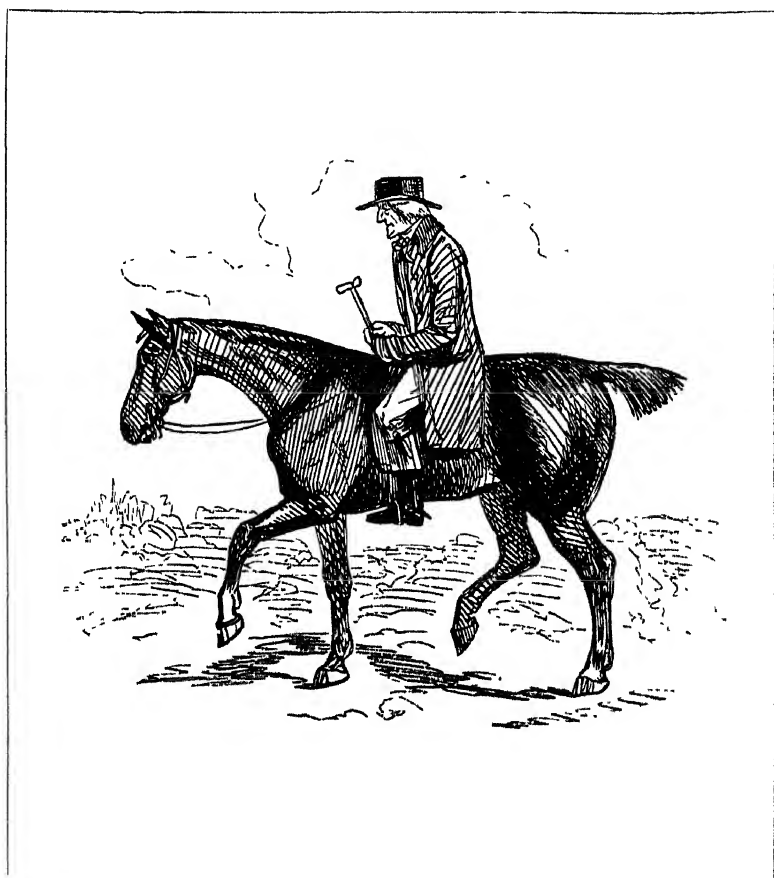
They approach rising ground, and the pack no longer press forward in eager jealousy, but each hound seems settled in his place; in truth, the pace has told upon uneven condition, and four hounds alone carry the scent. The ground becomes steeper and steeper, and even the fox has traversed the "mountain's brow" at an angle. Now Climbank's outline stands against the blue sky, and the pack wind after him in long-drawn file. Michael jumps off his horse as he approaches the steep ascent, and runs up, leading; Peter follows his example, but Fairlamb sticks to the cob, and the Doctor begins kicking and digging the dun with his spurs.

The heights of Ashley Downs are gained, and the scene changes. The horizon is bounded by the sea, upon whose briny bosom float some pigmy vessels, and the white breakers of the shore are just visible to the eye. It may be five miles off, and the space between is undulating and open, save towards a tract of woodland that appears to join the coast. The Doctor reaches the summit of Ashley Downs, and pulls up fairly exhausted. He takes off his hat and mops the perspiration from his brow, as he sits viewing hounds, horses, and men, swinging away down the hill like a bundle of clock pendulums into the vale below. Not a house to be seen! no, not even a cottage, and as the hounds turn to the right, and run the depths of a rocky dell, whose projecting cliffs support venerable yews and red-berried hollies, their music rends the air,

"As if a double hunt were heard at once."

"It's twenty years since I was here," said Michael to himself, wiping the perspiration from his forehead, "and the fox beat me, I recollect. If we can but press him out, we must kill. That's the very crag!" added he, "just below the crooked oak. He has tried it, but, thank goodness, Jolly-boy carries the scent beyond! *Yooi on, hounds! yooi on!*" holloas Michael from above, with a crack of his whip to some tail-hounds that kept snuffing at his sides; "*Forrard, away, forrard!*"

The dell opens into a broader expanse of better soil, and the



OLD MICHAEL.

HANDLEY CROSS.

whole pack pour forth into the vale beyond with a chorus and a melody "of musical discord and sweet thunder," that makes even Fairlamb's cob, though somewhat distressed, snort and prick up his ears with pleasure. Forward they go, with every hound upon the scent and speaking to it,

"What lengths they pass! where will the wandering chase
Lead them bewilder'd?"

"He's close *afoor* you!" cries a shepherd from a straw-thatched hut, whose dog having chased the fox had caused a check, and Michael cast forward at a trot. A flock of sheep wheeling round a field directed him to the line, and old Bonny-bell hits him off at the hedge-row. All the hounds then stoop to the scent and dash forward into the large wood beyond with mischief and venom in their cry. The wood is open at the bottom and they get through it like wild-fire. Michael is with them, Peter outside, with Fairlamb behind. The wood becomes studded with evergreens and gradually opens upon a lake with a bridge of costly structure at the end; Michael views the fox dead beat, with his tongue out and brush dragging along the ground, just turning the corner to cross the bridge; and dashing forward, hat in hand, in another minute ran into him on the mossy lawn by the terrace of Ongar Castle, just as the Earl of Bramber and family were sitting down to breakfast.

Who shall describe Michael's ecstasy as he picked up the fox and held him high above the baying pack. There he stood on the well-kept lawn, with his fox grinning in grim death in one hand and his low-crowned hat in the other, whooping and holloaing old Bonny-bell and the pack up to him, while the colt in a smoking white lather kept moving about, stamping and pawing up the mossy bank as he went. Then Michael pulled his bugle round and sounded a blast that brought Peter and Fairlamb along at the best pace they could muster, just as the Earl of Bramber threw up the breakfast-room window, and the towers of the castle flashed upon Michael's view. All, however, was right, for his lordship, having been a sportsman himself, entered into his feelings, and, stepping out upon the

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lawn, banished the idea of intrusion by congratulating Michael on his sport. The ladies, too, followed his example, and even forgave the trampling of the horse on their mossy carpet. The horses and hounds were then withdrawn from the terrace to a corner of the park close by, where the fox's brush, mask, and pads being cut off, Peter, climbing up a neighbouring oak, extended himself along a strong arm across which he balanced the fox, whooping and holloaing to the hounds, while Michael and Fairlamb did the same below, and the hounds being tantalised by expectation, and baying in full chorus, down went the fox crash into their mouths. "*Tear him and eat him !*" was the cry, and he was riven to pieces in an instant.

Years rolled on with varying sport, but with Michael at the head of the hunt. Time slackened his pace and the pace of his field; but as they all grew fat, and old, and grey together, no one noticed the change in his neighbour. The hounds got a name, and while in their zenith none could twist up a fox sooner or in better style. With plenty of music and mettle they seldom over-ran the scent, were never pressed upon or over-ridden. They turned like harriers. Kennel lameness was unknown.

As a huntsman Michael was superexcellent. He knew when to lay hold of his hounds and when to let them alone. His voice was shrill, clear, and musical, his eye quick and bright, and he saw things that others never noticed. It is told of him that one day, having pressed his fox very hard, and lost him most unaccountably in a wood of some ten acres, as he was telling his hounds over preparatory to going home, he all at once rode back to the top of a hill that commanded a view of the other side of the cover and tally-ho'd *away !* The fox being blown, was soon after killed, and when Michael came to account for his movements, he said that knowing the hounds were all out, he heard a blackbird frightened in cover, and supposed it might be by the fox moving after they were gone. Hundreds of similar stories were told of him.

In his large woodlands with which the outskirts of the vale abounded, many a fox owed his death to the way Michael threw

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in his tail-hounds at head. He knew his country and the runs of his foxes, and where he gained an advantage one season he did not forget to repeat it in the next. His dog language was peculiar, partaking more of the nature of dialogue than the short monosyllabic cheering and rating of the present day. His hounds were strongly attached to him; and if by any chance he did not accompany them to cover, they would rush full cry from Peter and his boy to meet him on the road.

Peter was a capital coadjutor, and master and man played into each other's hands with keenness untinctured with jealousy. The whipper-in's nerve continued after his master's began to fail, and he might often be seen boring through a bullfinch to clear the way for old Michael, or stopping at a brook to give him a help over.

Peace to Michael's manes! He died at the good old age of eighty without a groan or struggle. The lamp of life gradually flickered out, and his spirit passed away almost imperceptibly.

"His memory is cherished yet; and many people say,
With this good old English man good old times are gone for aye."



HANDLEY CROSS.

CHAPTER II.

THE RIVAL DOCTORS AND M.C.



"Curing Everything."

ELL, as we said before, when Michael Hardey died, great was the difficulty in the Vale of Sheepwash to devise how the farmers' hunt was to be carried on.

The difficulty was increased by the change that had come over the country itself. After upwards of thirty years' occupancy of it, Michael witnessed one of those magical revolutions that appear to belong rather to fiction than reality.

One Roger Swizzle, a roystering, red-faced, round-about apothecary, who had

somewhat impaired his constitution by his jolly performances while walking the hospitals in London, had settled at Appledove, a small market town in the vale, where he enjoyed a considerable want of practice in common with two or three other fortunate brethren. Hearing of a mineral spring at Handley Cross, which, according to usual country tradition, was capable of "curing everything," he tried it on himself, and either the water or the exercise in walking to and fro had a very beneficial effect on his somewhat deranged digestive

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powers. He analysed its contents, and finding the ingredients he expected, he set himself to work to turn it to his own advantage. Having secured a lease of the spring, he took the late Stephen Dumpling's house on the green, where at one or other of its four front windows a numerous tribe of little Swizzles might be seen flattening their noses against the panes. Roger possessed every requisite for a great experimental (qy. quack) practitioner,—assurance, a wife and large family, and scarcely anything to keep them on.

Being a shrewd sort of fellow, he knew there was nothing like striking out a new light for attracting notice, and the more that light was in accordance with the wishes of the world, the more likely was it to turn to his own advantage. Half the complaints of the upper classes he knew arose from over-eating and indolence, so he thought if he could originate a doctrine that with the use of Handley Cross waters people might eat and drink what they pleased, his fortune would be as good as made. To this end, therefore, he set himself manfully to work. Aided by the local press, he succeeded in drawing a certain attention to the water, the benefit of which soon began to be felt by the villagers of the place; and the landlord of the Fox and Grapes had his stable constantly filled with gigs and horses of the visitors. Presently lodgings were sought after, and carpeting began to cover the before sanded staircases of the cottages. These were soon found insufficient; and an enterprising bricklayer got up a building society for the erection of a row of four-roomed cottages called the Grand Esplanade. Others quickly followed, the last undertaking always eclipsing its predecessor, until that which at first was regarded with astonishment was sunk into insignificance by its more pretending brethren.

The doctor's practice "grew with the growth" of Handley Cross.

His rosy face glowed with health and good living, and his little black eyes twinkled with delight as he prescribed for each patient, sending them away as happy as princes.

"Ah, I see how it is," he would say, as a gouty alderman

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slowly disclosed the symptoms of his case. "Shut up your potato trap! I see how it is. Soon set *you* on your legs again. Was *far* worse myself. All stomach, sir—all stomach, sir—all stomach—three-fourths of our complaints arise from stomach;" stroking his corpulent protuberancy with one hand, and twisting his patient's button with the other. "Clean you well out and then strengthen the system. Dine with me at five and we will talk it all over."

With languid hypochondriacs he was subtle, firm, and eminently successful. A lady who took it into her head that she couldn't walk, Roger had carefully carried out of her carriage into a room at the top of his house, when raising a cry of "*Fire!*" she came spinning downstairs in a way that astonished herself. He took another a mile or two out of town in a fly, when, suddenly pulling up, he told her to get out and walk home, which she at length did, to the great joy of her husband and friends. With the great and dignified, and those who were really ill, he was more ceremonious. "You see, Sir Harry," he would say, "*it's all done by eating!* More people dig their graves with their teeth than we imagine. Not that I would deny you the good things of this world, but I would recommend a few at a time, and no mixing. No side dishes. No liqueurs—only two or three wines. Whatever your stomach fancies *give it!* Begin now, to-morrow, with the waters. A pint before breakfast—half an hour after, tea, fried ham and eggs, brown bread, and a walk. Luncheon—another pint—a roast pigeon and fried potatoes, then a ride. Dinner at six, *not later, mind*; gravy soup, glass of sherry, nice fresh turbot and lobster sauce—wouldn't recommend salmon—another glass of sherry—then a good cut out of the middle of a well-browned saddle of mutton, wash it over with a few glasses of iced champagne; and if you like a little light pastry to wind up with, well and good.—A pint of old port and a devilled biscuit can hurt no man. *Mind*, no salads, or cucumbers, or celery, at dinner, or fruit after. Turtle soup is very wholesome; so is venison. Don't let the punch be too acid, though. Drink the waters, live on a *regimen*, and you'll be well in no time."

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was expended on a pump room opening into spacious promenade and ball rooms, but the speculators never flagged, and new works were planned before those in hand were completed.

A thriving trade soon brings competition—another patientless doctor determined to try his luck in opposition to Roger Swizzle. Observing the fitness of that worthy's figure for the line he had taken, Dr. Sebastian Mello considered that his pale and sentimental countenance better became a grave and thoughtful character, so determined to devote himself to the serious portion of the population. He, too, was about forty, but a fair complexion, flowing sandy locks, and a slight figure, would let him pass for ten years younger. He had somewhat of a Grecian face, with blue eyes, and regular teeth, vieing the whiteness of his linen.

Determined to be Swizzle's opposite in every particular, he was studiously attentive to his dress. Not that he indulged in gay colours, but his black suit fitted without a wrinkle, and his thin dress boots shone with patent polish; turned-back cambric wristbands displayed the snowy whiteness of his hand, and set off a massive antique ring or two. He had four small frills to his shirt, and an auburn hair chain crossed his broad roll-collared waistcoat, and passed a most diminutive Geneva watch into its pocket. He was a widower with two children, a boy and a girl, one five and the other four. Mystery being his object, he avoided the public gaze. Unlike Roger Swizzle, who either trudged from patient to patient, or whisked about in a gig, Dr. Sebastian Mello drove to and fro in a claret-coloured fly, drawn by dun ponies. Through the plate-glass windows a glimpse of his reclining figure might be caught, lolling luxuriously in the depths of its swelling cushions, or musing complacently with his chin on a massive gold-headed cane. With the men he was shy and mysterious; but he could talk and flatter the women into a belief that they were almost as clever as himself.

As most of his fair patients were of the serious, or blue-stockings school, he quickly discovered the bent of each mind, and by studying the subject astonished them by his genius and

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versatility. In practice he was also mysterious. Disdaining Roger Swizzle's one mode of treatment, he professed to take each case upon its merits, and kept a large quarto volume, into which he entered each case, and its daily symptoms. Thus, while Roger Swizzle was inviting an invalid to exhibit his tongue at the corner of a street—lecturing him, perhaps, with a friendly poke in the ribs, for over-night indulgence, Dr. Mello would be poring over his large volume, or writing Latin prescriptions for the chemists. Roger laughed at Sebastian, and Sebastian professed to treat Roger with contempt—still competition was good for both, and a watering-place public, ever ready for excitement, soon divided the place into Swizzleites and Melloites.

Portraits appeared at the windows, bespeaking the character of each—Swizzle sat with a patient at a round table, indulging in a bee's-winged bottle of port, while Mello reclined in a curiously carved chair, one beringed hand supporting his flowing-locked head, and the other holding a book. Swizzle's was painted by the artist who did the attractive window-blind at the late cigar shop in the Piccadilly Circus, while Sebastian was indebted to Mr. Grant for the gentlemanly ease that able artist invariably infuses into his admirable portraits.

Just as the rival doctors were starting into play, a third character slipped into Handley Cross, without which a watering-place is incomplete. A tall, thin, melancholy-looking man made his appearance at the Spa, and morning after morning partook of its beverage, without eliciting from widow, wife, or maid an inquiry as to who he was. He might be a Methodist preacher, or a music-master, or a fiddler, or a fencer, or a lawyer, or almost anything that one chose to fancy—he might also be any age, from five-and-thirty to fifty, or even more, for strongly indented lines furrowed the features of a square and cadaverous countenance, while intrusive grey hairs appeared among his thin black hair, plastered to advantage over a flat low forehead—straggling whiskers fringed his hollow cheeks, growing into a somewhat stronger crop below the chin.

His costume consisted of an old well-brushed hat, lined throughout with black, a mohair stock, with a round embroidered

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shirt-collar, an old white-elbowed, white-seamed black dress-coat, while a scrumpy, ill-washed buff waistcoat exposed the upper buttons of a pair of much puckered Oxford-grey trousers, and met, in their turn, a pair of square-cut black gaiters and shoes.

The place being yet in its infancy, and many of the company mere birds of passage, the "unnoticed" held on the even tenor of his way, until he eat himself into the President's chair of the Dragon Hotel. He then became a man of importance. The after-comers, having never known him in any other situation, paid him the deference due to a man who daily knocked the table with a hammer, and proposed the health of "Her Majesty the Queen," while mutual convenience connived at the absurdity of being introduced by a man who knew nothing of either party. Being of a ferreting disposition, he soon got acquainted with people's histories, and no impediment appearing in the way, he at length dubbed himself Master of the Ceremonies, and issued his cards,

CAPTAIN DOLEFUL, M.C.

Who, or what he was, where he came from, or anything about him, no one ever cared to inquire. He was now "Master of the Ceremonies," and Masters of Ceremonies are not people to trifle with. The visitors who witnessed his self-installation having gone, and feeling his throne pretty firm under him, he abdicated the chair at the Dragon, and retiring to lodgings at Miss Jelly's, a pastry-cook and confectioner, at the corner of two streets, opened books at the libraries for the reception and record of those complimentary fees that prudent mammas understand the use of too well for us to shock the delicacy of either party by relating.

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This much, however, we should mention of Captain Doleful's history, for the due appreciation of his amiable character. He was pretty well off—that is to say, he had more than he spent; but money being the darling object of his heart, he perhaps saved more than others would have done out of the same income. He had been in the militia—the corps we forget—but he had afterwards turned coal-merchant (at Stroud, we believe), an unprosperous speculation, so he sold the good-will of a bad business to a young gentleman anxious for a settlement, and sunk his money in an annuity. There are dozens of such men at every large watering-place. In this case, a Master of the Ceremonies was as much wanted as anything else, for the Pump and Promenade Rooms were on the eve of completion, and there would be no one to regulate the music in the morning, the dances in the evening, or the anticipated concerts of the season. It was out of Roger Swizzle's line, and, of course, Sebastian Mello disapproved of such frivolities.

Handley Cross had now assumed quite a different character. Instead of a quiet, secluded village, rarely visited by a stranger, and never by any vehicle of greater pretensions than a gig, it had become a town of some pretension, with streets full of shops, large hotels, public buildings, public-houses, and promenades. The little boys and girls left their labour in the fields, to become attendants on leg-weary donkeys, or curtsying-offerers of wild flowers to the strangers. A lovers' walk, a labyrinth, a waterfall, grottoes, and a robbers' cave, were all established; and as the controversy between the doctors waxed warmer, Sebastian Mello interdicted his patients from the use of Swizzle's Spa, and diluting a spring with Epsom salts and other ingredients, proclaimed his to be the genuine one, and all others spurious. He then, under the signature of "Galen," entered into a learned and rather acrimonious argument with himself, in the great "London Medical Mediator," as to the wonderful virtues of the Handley Cross New Spa.

Galen, who led the charge, while admitting Dr. Mello's great talents, had described the waters as only so so; while Dr. Sebastian Mello, disdaining the paltry subterfuge of an

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anonymous signature, boldly came forward and stated facts to prove the contrary.

Galen, nothing daunted, quoted other places as superior; but his vehemence diminishing in the ratio of the doctor's eloquent confidence, he gradually died out, leaving the doctor the undisputed champion of a water capable of curing every disease under the sun. Parliament being up, and news scarce, the doctor contrived, through the medium of a brother, a selector of shocking accidents, to get sundry extracts inserted in a morning paper, from whence the evening ones gladly transplanted them, and the country ones rehashing them for their Saturday customers, the name of the waters, and the fame of the doctor, spread throughout the land, and caused a wonderful sensation in his favour.

The effects were soon felt, for lodgings and houses were written for from all parts, and as a crowning piece of luck a railway was just then opened out to Silverley, some twenty miles beyond, for the purpose of supplying London with lily-white sand, which was soon converted into a passenger line with a station for our rising Spa.

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CHAPTER III.

THE RIVAL ORATORS.



HUS, then, matters stood at Michael Hardey's death. A great town had risen in the centre of his country, the resort of the rich, the healthy, the sick, and the idle of the land. Rival doctors divided the medical throne, and Captain Doleful was the self-appointed *arbiter elegantiarum*. The hounds, though originally hardly a feature, had lately been appended to the list of attractions both in the way of newspaper encomiums and in the more open notice of "Houses to Let." Indeed, such was the fame of Michael and his pack, that several corpulent cob-riding bachelors had taken up their quarters at Handley Cross for the purpose of combining morning exercise and evening amusements, and several young gentlemen had shown such an anxiety to get the horses out of the flies, that Duncan Nevin, the livery-stable keeper, had begun to think seriously of keeping a hack hunter or two.

This worthy—a big, consequential, dark-haired, dark-eyed, butler-marrying-housekeeper, having run the gauntlet of inn, public-house, and waiter, since he left service, had set up in Handley Cross, as spring-van luggage remover, waiter at short notice, and owner of a couple of flies and three horses, an establishment that seemed more likely to do good than any of his previous speculations. Not that he knew anything about horses, but having resolved that ten pounds was an outside price, he could not easily lose much. As a seller he was less contracted in his estimates.

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He it was who first heard of the death of Michael Hardey, and quickened by self-interest he was soon at Miss Jelly's with Captain Doleful. Roger Swizzle being seen feeling a patient's pulse in a donkey gig, was invited to the consultation, and though none of them saw how the thing was to be accomplished—they agreed that it would be a great feature to have the hounds at Handley Cross, and that a public meeting should be called to take the matter into consideration. Of course, like sensible people, the land-owners would take their tone from the town, it being an established rule at all watering-places that the visitors are the lords paramount of the soil.

The meeting, as all watering-place meetings are, was most numerously attended; fortunately some were there who could direct the line of proceeding. On the motion of Captain Doleful, Augustus Barnington, Esq., a rich, red-headed Cheshire squire, took the chair, and not being a man of many words, contented himself by stammering something about honour, and happy to hear observations. We do not know that we need introduce Mr. Barnington further at present, save as the obedient husband of a very imperious lady, the self-appointed Queen of Handley Cross.

Captain Doleful then squared himself into attitude, and after three or four ghastly simpers and puckers of his mouth, complimented the husband of his great patron upon the very able manner in which he had opened the business of the meeting. "It would be superfluous in him to waste their valuable time dilating upon the monstrous advantages of a pack of hounds, not only in a health-giving point of view, but as regarded the prosperity of their beautiful and flourishing town. To what was the prosperity of other inferior places to be ascribed, but to their hunting establishments, for it was well known their waters were immeasurably inferior to what *they* enjoyed, not only in sulphuretted hydrogen, but also in iodine and potash. But that was beside the question. For his own part, he stood there upon public grounds alone (hear, hear). His numerous and arduous duties of regulating the Spas in the mornings, the promenades at noon, and the balls and concerts of an evening,

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left him but too little leisure as it was to pay those polite attentions to the fashionable world which were invariably expected from a well-bred master of ceremonies. Many of the aristocratic visitors, to be sure, he observed by the subscription book at the library, had kindly overlooked his remissness, unintentional and scarcely to be avoided as it was—and he trusted others would extend him a similar indulgence. With respect to the maintenance of the foxhounds, he confessed he was incompetent to offer any suggestion; for though he had long worn a scarlet coat, it was when in the army—a militia captain—and hunting formed no part of their exercise. Perhaps some gentleman who understood something about the matter would favour the meeting with his ideas upon the number of dogs and foxes they should keep (laughter); the probable expense of their maintenance (renewed laughter); and then they might set about seeing what they could raise by way of subscription.” The conclusion of his speech was greeted with loud applause, amid which the captain resumed his seat with a long-protracted, mouth-stretching, self-satisfied grin.

Mr. Dennis O'Brian, a big broad-shouldered, black-whiskered, card-playing, fortune-hunting Irishman, after a short pause rose to address the meeting. “Upon his honour,” said he, throwing open his coat, “but the last spoken honourable jontleman had made a mighty nate introduction of the matter in its true light, for there was no denying the fact that *money* was all that was wanted to carry on the war. He knew the Ballyshannon dogs in the county of Donegal, kept by Mr. Trodennick, which cost half nothing at all and a little over, which showed mighty nate sport, and that was all they wanted. By the powers! but they were the right sort, and followed by rale lovers of the sport from a genuine inclination that way, and not for mere show sake, like many of the spalpeens of this country (applause). If the company would appoint him manager-gineral, and give him a couple of hundred in hand, and three or four more at the end of the season, by the holy piper! he would undertake to do all that was nadeful and proper, and make such an example of everything that came in

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his way, as would astonish his own and their wake minds for iver. He would have foxes' *pates* by the dozen. He had no fear; faith, none at all. By the great gun of Athlone, he would ride in and out of the Ballydarton pound, or fly at a six-foot brick and mortar wall, dashed, spiked, and coped with broken bottles! He had a horse that he would match against any thing that iver was foaled—a perfect lump of elasticity from his shoulder to the tip of his tail—the devil be with him! but when you got on his back it was ten to one but he sprung you over his head by the mere contraction of his muscles! Faith! at his castle in Connaught, he had many such, and he would give any jontleman or man of fortune in the company that would fetch a few over to England one for his trouble.” Thus Mr. Dennis O’Brian rattled on for ten minutes or more without producing any favourable effect upon the meeting, for having won or borrowed money from most of them, no one felt inclined to allow him to increase his obligations.

When he had exhausted himself, Mr. Romeo Simpkins, a pert, but simple-looking, pink-and-white, yellow-haired youth, studying the law in Hare Court, in the Temple, being anxious to train his voice for the bar, came forward from the crowd that had congregated behind the chair, and looking very sheepish, after casting his eye into his hat, where he had a copious note of his speech, set off at a hand gallop with the first sentence as follows:—“ Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, in presuming to introduce myself upon the notice of the meeting, I assure you I am actuated by no motive but an anxious desire, such as must pervade the breast of every free-born Englishman, every lover of his country—every—I mean to say every—every”—here he looked imploringly round the room, as much as to say, “What a mess I’m in!” and then casting his eyes into his hat again, attempted to read his notes, but he had made them so full, and the novelty of his situation had so bewildered him, that they were of no use, and, after a long string of stutters, he slunk back into the crowd amid the laughter and applause of the company. As he left the room, he dropped his notes, which, as the reader will see from the

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following specimen, were framed for rather a *serious* infliction :
“ *Presume* to address—love of country—of all out-of-door amusements, nothing like hunting—encouraged by best authorities—practised by greatest men—*Sacred history*—Nimrod of Babylon—Venus took the field—Adonis killed in chase—Persians fond of hunting—Athenians ditto—Solon restrained ardour—Lacedemonians and their breed of speedy dogs—Xenophon—Olympic games—Romans—Aristotle—Oppian—Adrian—Ascanius—Somerville—Beckford—Meynell—Colonel Cook—Nimrod of Calais—Thanks—Attentive hearing.”

Mr. Abel Snorem next addressed the meeting. He was a grey-headed, sharp-visaged, long-nosed, but rather gentlemanly-looking, well-dressed man, who was notorious for addressing every meeting he could get to, and wearying the patience of his audiences by his long-winded orations. Throwing back his coat, he gave the table a thump with his knuckles, and immediately proceeded to speak, lest the Chairman should suffer any one else to catch his eye.—“ Mr. Chairman and gentlemen,” said he, “ if I am rightly informed—for I have not a copy of the proclamation with me—this meeting has been convened for the purpose of taking into consideration a very important question connected with the prosperity of this salubrious spot,—a spot, I may say, unrivalled both for its health-giving properties and for those rural beauties that nature has so bountifully lavished around. In bringing our minds to the calm and deliberate consideration of the subject—fraught, as I may say it is, with the welfare, the happiness, the recreation, the enjoyment, of many of those around—I feel assured that it would be wholly superfluous in me to point out the propriety of exercising a sound, impartial, unbiassed judgment—dismissing from our minds all political bias, all party feeling, all invidious comparison, all speculative theories, and of looking at the question in its single capacity, weighing it according to its true merits, apart from all personal consideration, and legislating upon it in such a manner as we shall conceive will be most conducive to the true interest of this town, and to the honour and welfare of the British dominions.

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(Laughter and loud coughing, with cries of "question.") The question appeared to him to be one of great simplicity, and whether he regarded it in the aggregate, or considered it in detail, he found none of those perplexing difficulties, those aggravating technicalities, those harrowing, heart-burning jealousies, that too frequently enveloped matters of less serious import, and led the mind insensibly from the contemplation of the abstract question that should engage it, into those loftier fields of human speculation that better suited the discursive and ethereal genius of the philosopher than the more substantial matter-of-fact understandings of sober-minded men of business (loud coughing and scraping of feet). Neither was it tinged with any considerations that could possibly provoke a comparison between the merits of the agricultural and manufacturing interests, or excite a surmise as to the stability of the lords, or the security of the Church, or yet the constitution of the commons; it was, in short, one of those questions upon which contending parties, meeting on neutral ground, might extend the right hand of fellowship and friendship, when peace and harmony might kiss each other, truth and justice join the embrace, and the lion and the lamb lie down together"—(*"Cock-a-doodle-doo!"* crowed some one, which produced a roar of laughter, followed by cheers, whistles, coughs, scraping of feet, and great confusion). Mr. Snorem, quite undaunted and with features perfectly unmoved, merely noticed the interruption by a wave of the right hand, and silence returning, in consequence of the exhaustion of the "movement" party, he drew breath and again went off at score.

"The question, he would repeat, was far from being one of difficulty—nay, so simple did it appear to his mind, that he should be greatly surprised if any difference of opinion existed upon it. He rejoiced to think so, for nothing was more conducive to the success of a measure than the unanimous support of all parties interested in it; and he did hope and trust that the result of that meeting would show to the world how coinciding in sentiment had been the deliberation of the distinguished assembly which he then had the honour of addressing (applause with

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loud coughing, and renewed cries of “question, question,” “shut it up,” “order, order”).—He was dealing with it as closely, and acutely, as logic and the English language would allow (renewed uproar). It appeared to him to be simply this—Divest the question of all superfluous matter, all redundant verbiage, and then, let the meeting declare that the establishment respecting whose future maintenance they had that day assembled had been one of essential service to the place—upon that point, he had no doubt, they would be unanimous—(“yes, yes, we know all that”). Secondly; they should declare that its preservation was one of paramount importance to the place and neighbourhood, and then it would necessarily resolve itself into this—(“*Cock-a-doodle-doo!*” with immense laughter)—those who were of opinion that the establishment was of importance would give it their countenance and support, while on the other hand those who were of a contrary opinion would have nothing whatever to say to it. He regretted the apparent reluctance of some of the company to grant him a fair and extended hearing, because, without vanity, he thought that a gentleman like himself, in the habit of attending and addressing public meetings (laughter), was likely to clear away many of the cobwebs, films, mystifications, and obstructions that hung in the way of a clear and unprejudiced view and examination of the question; but such unfortunately being the case, he should content himself by simply moving the resolution which he held in his hand and would read to the company.

“That it is the opinion of this meeting that the hounds which have hitherto hunted the Vale of Sheepwash and adjacent country have contributed very materially to the amusement of the inhabitants and visitors of Handley Cross Spa.” Mr. Hookem, the librarian, seconded the resolution, which was put, and carried unanimously.

Mr. Fleeceall, the solicitor, a violent Swizzleite, then stood forward to address the meeting.—He was a tallish, middle-aged, very sinister-looking, bald-headed gentleman, with a green patch over one eye, and a roguish expression in the other. He was dressed in a claret-coloured duffle-jacket, a buff kerseymere

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waistcoat with gilt buttons, drab trousers, with shoes and stockings. After two or three hems and haws, he began—"Very few countries," he said, "were now without hounds—certainly none in the neighbourhood of a town of the size, importance, and population of Handley Cross; a population too, he should observe, composed almost entirely of the aristocracy and pleasure and health-hunting portions of society. A couplet occurred to his recollection, which he thought was not inapplicable to the question before them, though he must observe that he introduced it without reference to any quarrel he might have had with a certain would-be medical man in the place, and without any intention of injuring that individual in the estimation of those who were inclined to place confidence in his prescriptions; he merely quoted the lines in illustration of his position, and as being better than his great and increasing business, not only as an Attorney at law, and Solicitor in the High Court of Chancery, but also as a Conveyancer, and Secretary of the Board of Guardians, and Clerk of the Mount Zion turnpike road, would allow him time to pen. They were these :

" ' Better to rove in fields for health unbought,
Than fee the doctor for a nauseous draught ; ' "

and he was sure no one there would deny that hunting, of all pursuits, was best calculated to restore or produce health and drive away dull care, the ills and evils of life, whether in mind or body (applause). Exercise, he would say, without invidious allusion, was the best of all *medicines*. They were standing in the garden of England. On every side Nature's charms were displayed around; and Handley Cross was the capital of Beauty's empire (applause). Within her bounds an unrivalled Spa had burst into existence, the health-giving qualities of whose gushing waters would draw people from all nations of the earth (cheers). Air, water, and exercise, he contended, would cure everything that was capable of relief (cheers). Let them, then, take measures for inducing people to enjoy the pure atmosphere from other motives than mere change of air, and the day could

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not be far distant when quackery would fail and hunting flourish. His business, as he said before, was great—almost overpowering; but such was his devotion to the place—such his detestation of humbug and knavery, that he would not hesitate to accept the situation of secretary to the hunt in addition to his other numerous and arduous appointments, and accept it too upon terms much lower than any other man could afford to take it at.”

Mr. Smith, a Hampshire gentleman, one of the earliest patrons of Handley Cross Spa, who, from the circumstance of his lodging round the corner of Hookem’s library, had acquired the name of “Round-the-corner Smith,” next presented himself to the notice of the meeting. He was a smart, genteelly dressed man, apparently about five-and-thirty, or forty, with a tremendous impediment in his speech—so troublesome was it, indeed, that it was hard to say whether it was most distressing to his hearers or himself. After opening a very natty single-breasted blue surtout, so as to exhibit a handsome double-breasted shawl waistcoat hung with Venetian chains, he coughed and commenced—not a speech but a long string of stutters. “He felt con-sid-did-did-did-rable di-di-di-difficulty in pro-no-no-no-nouncing an o-p-p-p-p-pinion upon the matter under con-sid-did-did-de-ration, because he was not co-co-co-co-conversant with the c-c-country, b-b-but he t-t-took it to be an establish-lish-lished rule, that all men who h-h-hun-hunted regularly with a p-p-pack of ho-ho-ho-hounds, ought to contribute to their sup-sup-sup-port. He knew something about h-h-h-hun-hunting, and if his hu-hu-hu-humble services would be of any avail, the co-co-co-country might command them. At the same time he thought that the h-h-h-hunt would be more li-li-likely to pros-pros-prosper if there were more ma-managers than one, and that a co-co-co-committee would be the likeliest thing under existing cir-cir-cir-cumstances to give sa-tis-tis-faction. He therefore be-be-begged to move the following resolution:—That it is expe-pe-pedient that the Vale of She-she-sheepwash ho-ho-ho-hounds should in fu-fu-future be carried on by subscription, by a co-co-co-committee of

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management, under the name of the Ha-ha-ha-handley Cross ho-ho-ho-hounds."

Captain Doleful begged to "propose as a fit and proper person to be associated with the honourable gentleman who had just addressed them, in the future management of the pack, his worthy, excellent, public-spirited, and popular friend, Augustus Barnington, Esq., of Barnington Hall, Cheshire, who, he felt convinced, would prove a most valuable ally not only in the field but also in superintending the home department, and arrangements, such as hunt dinners, hunt balls, and other entertainments to the ladies, which, he felt assured, it would be equally the pride of the hunt to offer, and the pleasure of the fair sex to accept." (Applause.)

Some one then proposed that Stephen Dumpling, son of the dun-pony riding doctor, should form the third.

Old Dumpling was dead, leaving Stephen a nice farm, and somewhat independent, but the latter had a soul above the plough, and having got a cornetcy in the yeomanry, had started a gig and horse, and drove about with a clown at his side, with a cockade in his hat. Stephen was a goodish-looking, half-buck, half-hawbuck sort of fellow. He was of middle stature, dark-complexioned, with dark eyes and hair; but there was an unfinished style about him that marred the general effect. If his hat was good, his boots were bad, and a good coat would be spoilt by a vulgar waistcoat, or misfitting trousers. He grew whiskers under his chin—smoked cigars—and rode steeple-chases. Still he was an aspiring youth, and took, as a matter of right, that which was only done to keep the farmers and landowners quiet—namely, adding him to the committee.

All this being carried *nem. con.*, the uniform was next discussed, and great was the diversity of opinion as to colour. Some wanted yellow, some wanted green, others blue, some both blue and green; in short, all gay colours had their supporters, but the old scarlet at length carried it, with the addition of a blue collar.

But the resolutions will best describe the result of the meeting.

HANDLEY CROSS.

The following is a copy :—

At a meeting of the visitors and inhabitants of Handley Cross Spa, held at the Dragon Hotel, in Handley Cross, to take into consideration the circumstances arising out of the lamented death of Michael Hardey, Esq., the late master of the hounds :

AUGUSTUS BARNINGTON, ESQ., in the Chair :

It was resolved,

That it is highly expedient to continue the hunt, and remove the hounds to Handley Cross.

That Augustus Barnington, Henry Smith, and Stephen Dumpling, Esquires, be appointed a committee of management.

That a club be formed, called the Handley Cross Hunt Club, the subscription to be three guineas, to be paid annually in November, to which the first twenty members shall be elected by the committee, and the subsequent members by the club at large—one black ball in ten excluding.

That, in order to meet the wishes of gentlemen desirous of contributing more than the annual subscription of three guineas, the treasurer be fully authorised to take as much as any one will give.

That the morning or undress uniform be a scarlet coat, with a blue collar, and such a button as the masters may appoint, breeches and waistcoat *ad libitum*.

That the evening or dress uniform be a sky-blue coat, lined with pink silk, canary-coloured shorts, and white silk stockings.

That any member appearing at the cover side, or at an evening meeting of the members, in any other dress, be fined one pound one, for the good of the hunt.

(Signed) A. BARNINGTON, *Chairman*.

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CHAPTER IV.

THE HUNT BALL.

"Then round the room the circling Dowagers sweep,
Then in loose waltz their thin-clad daughters leap;
The first in lengthened line majestic swim,
The last display the free unfettered limb."



"The wine circulated languidly."

JOY, universal joy, prevailed at Handley Cross when it became known that a committee of management had undertaken to hunt the Vale of Sheepwash. The place had not had such a fillip before. Farmers looked at their fields and their stacks, and calculated the consumption of corn.

Duncan Nevin took a six-stalled stable, and putting a splendid sign of a fox peeping over a rock at some rabbits, christened it the

NIMROD MEWS

LIVERY AND BAIT STABLES.

Hunters, Hacks, and Perfect Ladies' Pads.

N.B.—A GLASS COACH.

Emboldened by success, he scraped together five-and-twenty pounds, and asked everybody he met if he could tell him of

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a horse for the field. No one with money need long want a horse, but Duncan saw so differently when purchasing to what he did when selling that he seemed to have two pairs of eyes. To be sure, he was a good judge of a tail, and that, for a watering-place job-master, is something. "Don't tell me what Tattersall says about rat-tails," he used to observe; "I like them full, fine, and long. A horse with a full tail looks well in the field, on the road, or in harness, and will always bring his price."

His first purchase was an old Roman-nosed, white-faced, white-stockinged, brown horse, that had carried the huntsman of a pack of harriers for many a year, and was known by the distinguished name of Bulldog. He was a little, well-shaped, but remarkably ugly horse, and had a rheumatic affection in one of his hind legs, that caused him to limp, and occasionally go on three legs. He was never fast, and sixteen or seventeen years had somewhat slackened the pace of his youth; but he was a remarkably hard-constituted animal, that no one could drive beyond his speed, and he could creep through or leap almost anything he was put to.

The harriers being done up, the subscribers had handsomely presented the huntsman with his horse, which he came to offer Duncan Nevin for his stud. "He's varrar like the field," observed Nevin, eyeing him, "but his tail's shocking shabby, more like a worn-out whitenin-brush than anything else—our customers require them handsome—I fear he would only do for the field—I want them generally useful."

The huntsman declared he would go twice a week all the season, and offered to leap him over a gate. This he did so well that Duncan Nevin priced him—fifteen pounds was all he asked, and he bought him for ten.

A sixteen hands bad bay mare, with a very large head, very light middle, and tail down to the hocks, was his next purchase for the field. She was a showy, washy, useless beast, that could caper round a corner, or gallop half-mile heats, if allowed plenty of breathing time, but invariably pulled off her shoes at her leaps, and was a whistler to boot—she cut behind and dished before

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—still she had an undeniable tail, and her size, and her great hocks, as she stood well-clothed and littered, gave her the appearance of a hunter. She was six years old, had never done any work—because she never could, and in all probability never would. The wags christened her Sontag, on account of her musical powers.

Fair Rosamond, a little cantering up and down white hack, stood in the third stall; and when all the three fly-horses were in, which was never except at night, the six-stall stable was full. The news of the purchases flew like lightning; the number was soon magnified into ten—crowds besieged the mews to learn the terms, and the secretary wrote to know what Nevin meant to give to the hunt.

Everything now looked cheerful and bright—the hounds were the finest playthings in the world—they furnished occupation morning, noon, and night. Every man that was ever known to have been on horseback was invited to qualify for wearing the unrivalled uniform. Names came rolling in rapidly—the farmers, to the number of fifteen, sent in their five and ten-pound notes, while the visitors were extremely liberal with their names, especially on a representation from Fleeceall that payment might be made at their convenience—their names, the *honour* of their names, in short, being the principal thing the committee looked to. Dennis O'Brian put his down for five-and-twenty guineas, Romeo Simpkins did the same for five, Abel Snorem promised “to see what he could do,” and all wrote, either promisingly, encouragingly, or kindly.

Duncan Nevin converted a stable into a kennel and feeding-house, and gave up his wife's drying ground for an airing yard, into which the poor hounds were getting constantly turned from their comfortable benches by one or other of the committee showing them off to his friends. Then the make, shape, and colour of every hound was discussed, and what some thought defects, others considered beauties. The kennel was pretty strong in numbers, for all the worn-out, bleary-eyed hounds were scraped together from all parts of the Vale, to make a show; while a white terrier, with a black patch on his



"A SHOWY, WASHY, USELESS BEAST."

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eye—who was re-christened “Mr. Fleeceall”—and an elegantly-clipped, curled, dressed, and arranged black French poodle, were engaged to attract the ladies, who seldom have any taste for fox-hounds. Every allurements was resorted to, to draw company.

Poor Peter soon began to feel the change of service. Instead of Michael Hardey’s friendly intercourse, almost of equality, he was ordered here, there, and everywhere, by his numerous masters; it was Peter here, Peter there, and Peter everywhere, no two masters agreeing in orders. Smith would have the hounds exercised by daybreak; Barnington liked them to go out at noon, so that he could ride with them, and get them to know him; and Dumpling thought the cool of the evening the pleasantest time. Then Barnington would direct Peter to go on the north road, to make the hounds handy among carriages, while Dumpling, perhaps, would write to have them brought south, to trot about the downs, and get them steady among mutton; while Smith grumbled and muttered something about “blockheads”—“knowing nothing about it.” Each committeeman had his coterie, with whom he criticised the conduct of his colleagues.

Autumn “browned the beech,” but the season being backwardly, and the managers not exactly agreeing in the choice of a whipper-in, the ceremony of cub-hunting was dispensed with, and Peter, with the aid of Barnington’s groom, who had lived as a stable-boy with a master of hounds, was ordered to exercise the pack among the deer parks and preserves in the neighbourhood. November at length approached; the latest packs began to advertise; and Kirby-gate stood forth for the Melton hounds on the Monday. All then was anxiety! Saddlers’ shops were thronged at all hours. Griffith, the prince of whip-makers, opened an establishment containing every possible variety of hunting-whip; and Latchford appointed an agent for the sale of his “persuaders.” Ladies busied themselves with plaiting hat-cords for their favourites, and the low green chair at the boot-maker’s was constantly occupied by some gentleman with his leg cocked in the

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air, as if he had taken a fit, getting measured for “a pair of tops.”

How to commence the season most brilliantly was the question, and a most difficult one it was. Dumpling thought a “flare-up” of fireworks over-night would be a flash thing; Round-the-corner Smith was all for a hunt dinner; and after due discussion and the same happy difference of opinion that had characterised all their other consultations, Captain Doleful recommended a *ball*, in the delusive hope that it would have the effect of making friends and getting subscribers to the hounds, and be done, as all contemplated acts are, at a very trifling expense. There was no occasion to give a supper, he said; refreshments—tea, coffee, ices, lemonade, and negus, handed on trays, or set out in the anteroom, would be amply sufficient, nor was there any necessity for asking any one from whom they did not expect something in the way of support to the hounds. Round-the-corner Smith did not jump at the proposal, having been caught in a similar speculation of giving a ball to a *limited* party at Bath, and had been severely mulcted in the settling; but Barnington stood in too wholesome a dread of his wife to venture any opposition to such a measure; and Stephen Dumpling merged his fears in the honour and the hopes of making it pay indirectly by gaining subscribers to the hounds. The majority carried it; and Captain Doleful spread the news like wildfire—of course taking all the credit of the thing to himself.

What a bustle it created in Handley Cross! The poor milliner-girls stitched their fingers into holes, and nothing was seen at the tailors’ windows but sky-blue coats, lined with pink silk, and canary-coloured shorts. The thing looked well, for fourteen candidates appeared, all ready to owe their three guineas for the honour of wearing the uniform, or for the purpose of getting their wives and daughters invited to the ball. It was fixed for the first Monday in November, and it was arranged that the hounds should meet in the neighbourhood on the following day.

Meanwhile the committee of management and Doleful met

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every morning for the purpose of making arrangements, sending invitations, and replying to applications for tickets. The thing soon began to assume a serious aspect; the names, which at first amounted to fifty, had swelled into a hundred and thirteen, and each day brought a more numerous accession of strength than its predecessor. Round-the-corner Smith's face lengthened as the list of guests increased, and Dumpling began to have his doubts about the safety of the speculation. Barnington took it very easily, for he had plenty of money, and the excitement kept his peevish wife in occupation; and she, moreover, had plenty of friends, whom she kept showering in upon them at a most unmerciful rate. Every morning a footman in red plush breeches and a short jacket arrived with names to be put down for invitations. Doleful was in great favour with her, and by her request he took his place every morning at the table of the committee-room to keep her husband "right," as she called it. Of course, with such incongruous materials to work with, the thing was not arranged without great difficulty and dissension. Dumpling put down his cousins, the three Miss Dobbsses, whose father was a farmer and brewer, and making pretty good stuff—"Dobbs's Ale" was familiar at Handley Cross, and his name occupied divers conspicuous signs about the town. To these ladies Mrs. Barnington demurred, having no notion of "dancing in a hop-garden;" and it was with the greatest difficulty, and only on the urgent representation of Doleful that their rejection would cause the secession of Dumpling, that she consented to their coming. To divers others she took similar objections, many being too low, and some few too high for her, and being the daughter of a Leeds manufacturer, she could not, of course, bear the idea of anything connected with trade.

At the adjournment of each meeting, Doleful repaired to her and reported progress, carrying with him a list of invitations, acceptances, and refusals, with a prospectus of those they thought of inviting. These latter underwent a rigid scrutiny by Mrs. Barnington, in aid of which all Doleful's local knowledge, together with Mrs. Fribble's millinery knowledge,

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Debrett's Baronetage, and Burke's Landed Gentry of England, were called together, and the list was reduced by striking out names with an elegant gold pencil-case with an amethyst seal, as she languished out her length on a chaise-longue. One hundred and fifty-three acceptances, and nineteen invitations out, were at length reported the strength of the party; and Mrs. Barnington, after a few thoughtful moments passed in contemplating the ceiling, expressed her opinion that there ought to be a regular supper, and desired Doleful to tell Barnington that he must do the thing as it ought to be, if it were only for her credit. Poor Doleful looked miserable at the mention of such a thing, for Smith and Dumpling had already begun to grumble and complain at the magnitude of the affair, which they had expected would have been a mere snug party among the members of the hunt and their friends, instead of beating up for recruits all the country round. Doleful, however, like a skilful militia-man, accomplished his object by gaining Dumpling over first, which he did by pointing out what an admirable opportunity it was for a handsome young man like himself, just beginning life, to get into good society, and perhaps marry an heiress; and Dumpling, being rather a pudding-headed sort of fellow, saw it exactly in that light, and agreed to support Doleful's motion, on the assurance that it made very little difference in the expense whether the catables were set out lengthways on a table and called "supper," or handed about all the evening under the name of "refreshments." Indeed, Doleful thought the supper might be the cheaper of the two, inasmuch as it would prevent the pilfering of servants and the repeated attacks of the hungry water-drinking guests.

This matter settled, then came the fluttering and chopping-off of chickens' heads, the wringing of turkeys' necks, the soaking of tongues, the larding of hams, the plucking of pheasants, the skewering of partridges, the squeezing of lemons, the whipping of creams, the stiffening of jellies, the crossing of open tarts, the colouring of custards, the shaping of blanc-mange, the making of macaroons, the stewing of pears—all the cares and

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concomitants of ball-making and rout-giving; and Spain, the "Gunter" of the place, wrote off to London for four-and-twenty sponge cake foxes, with canary-coloured rosettes for tags to their brushes.

The great, the important night at length arrived. The sun went down amidst a brilliant halo of purple light, illuminating the sky with a goodly promise of the coming day, but all minds were absorbed in the events of the evening, and for once the poet's "gay to-morrow of the mind" was disregarded. Every fly in the town was engaged nine deep, and Thompson and Fleuris, the opposition London and Parisian perruquiers, had dressed forty ladies each before five. Towards dusk, young gentlemen whose hair "curled naturally" came skulking into their shops to get the "points taken off;" after which, quite unconsciously, the irons were "run through," and the apprentice boys made door-mats of their heads by wiping their dirty hands upon them under pretence of putting a little "moisture in;" while sundry pretty maids kept handing little paste-board boxes over the counter, with whispered intimations that "*it* was wanted in time to dress for the ball." Master-tailors sat with their workmen, urging their needles to the plenitude of their pace; and at dinner time there were only three gentlemen in all the place minus the canary-coloured inexpressibles, and one whose sky-blue coat could not be lined until the Lily-white-sand train brought down a fresh supply of pink silk from town.

Doleful began dyeing his hair at three, and by five had it as dark as Warren's blacking. Mrs. Barnington did not rise until after the latter hour, having breakfasted in bed; and young ladies, having taken quiet walks into the fields with their mammas in the morning to get up complexions and receive instructions whom to repress and whom to encourage, sat without books or work, for fear of tarnishing the lustre of their eyes.

Night drew on—a death-like stillness reigned around, broken only by the occasional joke of a stationary flyman, or the passing jibe of a messenger from the baker's, tailor's, or



WAITING FOR THE FLY.

HANDLEY CROSS.

milliner's. The lower rooms of all the houses at length became deserted, and lights glimmered only in the upper stories, as though the inhabitants of Handley Cross were retiring to early rest.

* * * * *

Again, as if by general consent, the lights descended, and in drawing-rooms where the blinds had not been drawn or curtains closed, those who stood in the streets might see elegantly dressed young ladies entering with flat candlesticks in their hands, and taking their places before the fire, with perhaps a satin-slippered foot on the fender, waiting with palpitating hearts for their flies, anxious for the arrival of the appointed time, dreading to be early, yet afraid to be late. Wheels had been heard, but they had only been "taking up," none as yet having started for the ball. At length the clatter of iron steps, the banging of doors, and the superfluous cry of "Rooms!" resounded through the town, and the streets became redolent of animal life.

A line of carriages and flies was soon formed in Bramber Street, and Hector Hardman, the head constable, with his gilt-headed staff in his hand, had terrible difficulty in keeping order, and the horses' heads and carriage poles in their places. Vehicles from all quarters and of every description came pouring in, and the greetings of the postboys from a distance, the slangings of the flymen, with the dictatorial tones of gentlemen's coachmen and footmen, joined with the cries of the rabble round the door, as the sky-blue coats with pink silk linings popped out, resembled the noise and hubbub of the opera colonnade when a heavy shower greets the departing company.

The "Ongar Rooms" were just finished, and, with the exception of a charity bazaar for the purpose of establishing a Sunday School at Sierra Leone, had never been used. They were a handsome suite of rooms on the ground floor, entered from the street by two or three stone steps, under a temporary canopy, encircled with evergreens and variegated lamps. From the entrance-hall, in which at each end a good fire blazed, two

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rooms branched off, one for gentlemen's cloaks, the other for ladies. Immediately in front of the entrance, scarlet folding doors with round panes opened into a well-proportioned ante-room, which again led into the ball-room.

Ranged in a circle before the folding doors stood Barnington, Smith, Doleful, and Dumpling, all grinning, and dressed in sky-blue coats with pink linings, white waistcoats, canary-coloured shorts, and white silk stockings, except Doleful, who had on a crumpled pair of nankeen trousers, cut out over the instep, and puckered round the waist. Dumpling's dress was very good, and would have been perfect had he not sported a pair of half dirty yellow leather gloves and a shabby black neckcloth with red ends. There they all stood grinning and bowing as the entrances were effected, and Doleful introduced their numerous friends with whom they had not the happiness of a previous acquaintance. The plot soon thickened so much that, after bowing their heads like Chinese mandarins to several successive parties who came pushing their way into the room without receiving any salutation in return, and the blue coats with pink linings becoming too numerous to afford any distinguishing mark to the visitors, our managers and master of the ceremonies got carried into the middle of the room, after which the company came elbowing in at their ease, making up to their mutual friends as though it were a public assembly.

The fiddlers next began scraping their instruments in the orchestra of the ball-room like horses anxious to be off, and divers puffs of the horn and bassoon sounded through the building, but still the doors remained closed, and Doleful cast many a longing anxious eye towards the folding doors. Need we say for whom he looked? Mrs. Barnington had not arrived. The music at length burst forth in good earnest, and Doleful, after numerous inquiries being made of him why the ball did not commence, at length asked Barnington if he thought his good lady was coming; when most opportunely a buzz and noise were heard outside—the folding doors flew open, and in Mrs. Barnington sailed, with her niece, Miss Rider, on her arm.

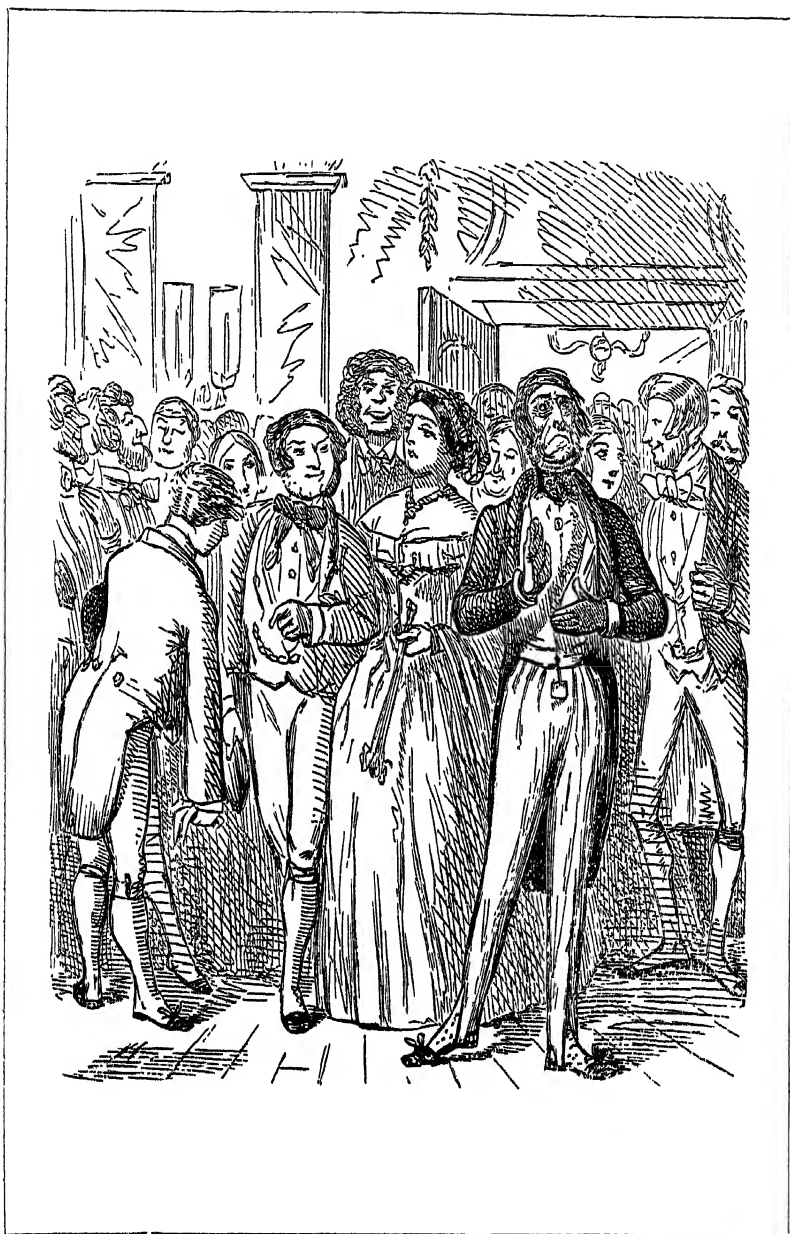
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Mrs. Barnington was a fine, tall, languishing-looking woman, somewhat getting on in years, but with marked remains of beauty, "sicklied o'er with the pale cast" of listlessness, produced by a mind unoccupied and bodily strength unexercised. Her features were full-sized, good, and regular, her complexion clear, with dark eyes that sparkled when lighted with animation, but more generally reposed in a vacant stare, whether she was engaged in conversation or not. She wore a splendid tiara of diamonds, with costly necklace and earrings of the same. Her dress, of the richest and palest pink satin, was girdled with a diamond stomacher, and a lengthening train swept majestically along the floor. Across her beautifully-moulded neck and shoulders, in graceful folds, was thrown a white Cachmere shawl, and her ungloved arm exhibited a profusion of massive jewellery. Her entrance caused a buzz, followed by silence throughout the room, and she sailed gracefully up an avenue formed by the separation of the company,—

"A queen in jest, only to fill the scene."

Doleful and the managers came forward to receive her, and she inclined herself slightly towards them and the few people whom she deigned to recognise.

Having, after infinite persuasion, consented to open the ball with Dumpling, and having looked round the company with a vacant stare, and ascertained that there was no one who could vie with her in splendour, she resignedly took his arm, and the ball-room door being at length thrown open, she sailed up to the top of the room, followed by countless sky-blue-coated and canary-legged gentry, escorting their wives, daughters, or partners, with here and there a naval or military uniform mingling among the gay throng of sportsmen and variously clad visitors. Most brilliant was the scene! The room was a perfect blaze of light, and luckless were the wearers of second-hand shoes or ball-stained gloves. There was Dennis O'Brian, towering over the head of everybody else, with his luxuriant whiskers projecting from his cheeks, like cherubs' wings on church corners, with an open shirt collar confined by a simple



CAPTAIN DOLEFUL. "PLACES FOR A COUNTRY DANCE."

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blue ribbon and a superabundant display of silk stocking and calf from below his well-filled canary-coloured shorts—for *smalls* would be a libel on the articles that held his middle-man. His dark eyes sparkled with vivacity and keenness—not the keenness of pleasure, but the keenness of plunder, for Dennis had dined off chicken broth and lemonade to be ready to

“Cut the light pack or call the rattling main,”

as occasion might offer towards the morning. Snorem, too, had decked himself out in the uniform of the hunt, and this being his usual bedtime, he walked about the room like a man in a dream, or a tired dog looking where to lie down. Then there was Romeo Simpkins, who had just arrived by the last Lily-white-sand train, and had all his friends and acquaintances to greet, and to admire his own legs for the first time protruding through a pair of buff shorts. Fleeceall stood conspicuous with a blue patch on his eye, pointing out his new friends to his wife, who was lost in admiration at the smartness of her spouse, and her own ingenuity in applying the rose-coloured lining of an old bonnet to the laps of his sky-blue coat.

Now the music strikes up in full chorus, and Doleful walks about the room, clapping his hands like a farmer's boy frightening crows, to get the company to take their places in a country dance; and Mrs. Barnington, having stationed herself at the top, very complacently leads off with “hands across, down the middle and up again,” with Stephen Dumpling, who foots it away to the utmost of his ability, followed by Round-the-corner Smith with her niece, Barnington with Miss Somebody-else, Romeo Simpkins with Miss Trollope, Dennis O'Brian, who looks like a capering lighthouse, with little old Miss Mordecai, the rich money-lender's daughter, and some thirty or forty couples after them. Mrs. Barnington's train being inconvenient for dancing, and having been twice trodden upon, upon reaching the bottom on the third time down the middle, she very coolly takes Dumpling's arm and walks off to the sofa in the bay window, where, having deposited herself, she despatches Dumpling to

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desire her husband not to exert himself too much, and to come to her the moment the dance is done. The country dance being at length finished, a quadrille quickly followed; after which came a waltz, then a galop, then another quadrille, then another waltz, then a reel, until the jaded musicians began to repent having been so anxious for the start.

Towards one o'clock the supper-room door was heard to close with a gentle flap, and Doleful was seen stealing out, with a self-satisfied grin on his countenance, and immediately to proceed round the room, informing such of the company as he was acquainted with, from having seen their names in his subscription book at the library, that the next would be the "supper dance," a dance that all persons who have "serious intentions" avail themselves of for the interesting purpose of seeing each other eat. Accordingly Dennis O'Brian went striding about the ball-room in search of little Miss Mordecai; Captain Doleful usurped Stephen Dumpling's place with Mrs. Barnington; Round-the-corner Smith started after the niece, and each man invested his person, in the way of a "pair-off," to the best of his ability. Barnington was under orders for Dowager Lady Turnabout, who toadied Mrs. Barnington and got divers dinners and pineapples for her trouble; and Stephen Dumpling, being now fairly "let into the thing," was left to lug in the two Miss Dobbses on one arm and old mother Dobbs on the other.

The simple-minded couples then stand up to dance, and as soon as the quadrilles are in full activity, Doleful offers his arm to Mrs. Barnington and proceeds into the supper-room, followed by all the knowing ones in waiting. But what a splendid supper it is! A cross table with two long ones down the centre, all set out with turkeys, chickens, hams, tongues, lobster salads, spun sugar pyramids, towers, temples, grottoes, jellies, tarts, creams, custards, pineapples, grapes, peaches, nectarines, ices, plovers' eggs, prawns, and four-and-twenty sponge-cake foxes, with blue, red, and canary-coloured rosettes for tags to their brushes! Green bottles with card labels, and champagne bottles without labels, with sherry, etc., are placed at proper intervals

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down the table, the champagne yielding a stronger crop upon the more fruitful soil of the cross table. Who ordered it nobody knows; but there it is, and it is no time for asking.

Shortly after the first detachment have got comfortably settled in their places the music stops, and the dancers come crowding in with their panting partners, all anxious for lemonade or anything better. Then plates, knives and forks are in request, the "far gone" ones eating with the same fork or spoon, those only "half gone" contenting themselves with using one plate. Barnington is in the chair at the cross table, with a fine sporting device of a fox, that looks very like a wolf, at his back, on a white ground, with "*Floreat Scientia*" on a scroll below, the whole tastefully decorated with ribbons and rosettes. Dumpling and Smith are Vice-Presidents. Hark to the clatter! "Miss Thompson, some turkey? Allow me to send you a little ham with it?" "Mrs. Jenkins, here's a delicious lobster salad." "Now, Fanny, my *dear*, see, you're dropping the preserve over your dress!" "Oh, dear! there goes my knife!" "Never mind, ma'am, I'll get you another." "Waiter! bring a clean glass—*two* of them!" "What will you take?" "Champagne, if you please." "Delightful ball, isn't it?" "How's your sister?" "Who'll take some pineapple punch?" "I will, with pleasure." "I've burst my sandal, and my shoe will come off." "Dear, that great awkward man has knocked the comb out of my head." "Go to see the hounds in the morning?" "Susan, *mind*, there's mamma looking." "Waiter, get me some jelly." "Bachelors' balls always the pleasantest." "Barnington is married." "Oh, he's *nobody*!" "Dumpling does it and stuttering Smith; there's no *Mister* Barnington." "There's the captain—I wonder if he sees us." "Oh, the *stupid*! he *won't* look this way. Should like to break his provoking head!" "How's your horse? Has it learned to canter?" "Take some tongue?" "Champagne, if you please."

Thus went the rattle, prattle, jabber and tattle, until Mr. Barnington, who had long been looking very uneasy, being unable to bear the further frowns of his wife, at length rose

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from his seat for the most awful of all purposes, that of monopolising all the noise of the room—a moment that can only be appreciated by those who have filled the unhappy situation of chairman in a company of ladies and gentlemen, when every eye is pointed at the unfortunate victim, and all ears are open to catch and criticise what he says. “Barnington! Barnington! chair! chair! order! order! silence!” cried a hundred voices, in the midst of which Mr. Barnington tried to steal away with his speech, but had to “whip back” and begin again.

“Gentlemen and ladies (order! order!)—I mean to say, Mr. Vice-Presidents, ladies and gentlemen (hear, hear), I beg to propose the health of the Queen—I mean to say, the ladies who have honoured us with their presence this evening.” Great applause, and every man drank to his sweetheart.

Mrs. Barnington looked unutterable things at her spouse as he sat down, for women are all orators or judges of oratory, and well poor Barnington knew the vigour of her eloquence. Beckoning Doleful to her side, she desired him to tell Barnington not to look so like a sheepish schoolboy, but to hold himself straight and speak out as if he were *somebody*. This Doleful interpreted into a handsome compliment, which so elated our unfortunate that he immediately plucked up courage, and rising again, gave the table a hearty thump, and begged the company would fill a bumper to the health of the strangers who had honoured the Handley Cross hunt ball with their company. The strangers then began fidgeting and looking out an orator among themselves, but were put out of suspense by the rising of Dennis O'Brian, who returned thanks in one of his usual felicitous and appropriate speeches, and concluded by proposing the health of the chairman. Barnington was again on his legs, thanking them and giving “Success to fox-hunting,” which was acknowledged by Snorem, who, being half asleep, mistook it for the time when he had to propose the healths of Smith and Dumpling, to whom he paid such lengthy compliments that the ladies cut him short by leaving the room. All restraint

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now being removed, the gentlemen crowded up to the cross table, when those who had been laying back for supper until they got rid of the women went at it with vigorous determination—corks flew, dishes disappeared, song, speech, and sentiment were huddled in together, and in a very short time the majority of the company were surprised to find themselves amazingly funny.

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CHAPTER V.

THE HUNT COMMITTEE.

"It is our opening day."



"The Morning After."

HANDLEY CROSS had a very debauched look the morning after the hunt ball. The Ongar rooms, being lighted with windows round the top, with covered galleries outside, for the accommodation of milliners, ladies' maids, and such as wish to criticise their masters and mistresses, had no protecting blinds; and a strong party having settled themselves into "threesome" reels—the

gentlemen for the purpose of dancing themselves sober, the ladies, like Goldsmith's clown, to try and tire out the orchestra—the ball seemed well calculated to last for ever, when the appearance of daylight in the room made the wax lights look foolish, and caused all the old chaperons to rush to their charges and hurry them off, before bright Phœbus exposed the forced complexions of the night. All then was hurry-scurry; carriages were called up, and hurried off as though the plague had broken out, and Johns and Jehus were astonished at the bustle of their "mississes."

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The last fly at length drove off; the variegated lamps round the festooned porch began glimmering and dying in succession, as Doleful and the remaining gentlemen stood bowing, grinning, and kissing their hands to their departing partners, while their blue coats and canary-coloured shorts exhibited every variety of shade and complexion that the colours are capable of. Doleful's hair, too, assumed a vermilion hue. The town was clear, bright, and tranquil; no sound disturbed the quiet streets, and there was a balmy freshness in the morning air that breathed gratefully on the feverish frames of the heated dancers. The cock, "the trumpet of the morn," had just given his opening crow in Farmer Haycock's yard behind the rooms, and the tinkling bells of the oxen's yoke came softened on the air like the echoing cymbals of the orchestra.

St. George's chapel clock strikes! Its clear silvery notes fall full upon the listeners' ears. "One! two! three! four! five! six!—six o'clock!" and youths say it is not worth while going to bed, while men of sense set off without a doubt on the matter. Some few return to the supper-room to share the ends of champagne bottles and lobster salads with the waiters.

Morning brought no rest to the jaded horses and helpers of the town. No sooner were the Rosinantes released from the harness of the flies than they were led to the stable-doors and wiped and cleaned in a manner that plainly showed it was for coming service, and not for that performed. Bill Gibbon, the club-footed ostler of the "Swan Hotel and Livery Stables," had eight dirty fly-horses to polish into hunters before eleven o'clock, and Tom Turnbinn, and his deaf and dumb boy, had seven hunters and two flies ordered for the same hour. There was not a horse of any description but what was ordered for the coming day, and the donkeys were bespoke three deep.

If Duncan Nevin had had a dozen Bulldogs and Sontags, they would all have been engaged, and on his own terms too.

"Oh, sir!" he would say to inquirers, "that Bulldog's a smart horse—far too good for our work—he should be in a gentleman's stable—Did you ever see a horse so like the field, now? I'm only axin' thirty pound for him, and it's really givin'

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of him away—I couldn't let him go out under two guineas a day, and then only with a very careful rider, like yourself. Cost me near what I ax for him in the summer, and have had to put him into condition myself. Oats is very dear, I assure you. Perhaps you'd have the kindness not to say that he's hired, and save me the duty?"

A little before eleven the bustle commenced; the first thing seen was Peter leaving the kennel with the hounds, Abelard, the black poodle, and "Mr. Fleeceall," the white terrier with a black eye. Peter was dressed in a new scarlet frock coat with a sky-blue collar, buff striped toilanette waistcoat, black cap, new leathers and boots. His whip, spurs, gloves, bridle, and saddle were also new, and he was riding a new white horse. Barnington's groom followed, similarly attired; and this being his first appearance in the character of a whipper-in, he acted fully up to the designation by flopping and cracking the hounds with his whip, and crying, "Co'p, co'p, hounds!—Go on, hounds!—go on!—Drop it!—Leave it!—To him, to him!" and making sundry other orthodox noises.

Lampblack was that morning in great request. Broken knees, collar, and crupper marks had to be effaced, and some required a touch of lampblack on their heads, where they had knocked the hair off in their falls. The saddling and bridling were unique! No matter what sort of a mouth the horse had, the first bridle that came to hand was put into it.

Stephen Dumpling's horse, having travelled from home, was the first of the regulars to make his appearance in the street. He was a great, raking, sixteen-hands chestnut, with "white stockings," and a bang tail down to the hocks. He was decorated with a new bridle with a blue silk front, and a new saddle with a hunting-horn. Stephen's lad, dressed in an old blue dress-coat of his master's, with a blue and white striped livery waistcoat, top-boots, and drab cords, and having a cockade in his hat, kept walking the horse up and down before the Dragon Hotel, while Stephen, with a feverish pulse and aching head, kept sipping his coffee, endeavouring to make himself believe he was eating his breakfast. At last he lighted

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a cigar, and appeared, whip in hand, under the arched gateway. He had on a new scarlet coat with a blue collar, the same old red-ended neckcloth he had worn at the ball, and an infinity of studs down an ill-fitting, badly-washed shirt, a buff waistcoat, and a pair of make-believe leathers—a sort of white flannel, that after the roughings of many washings give gentlemen the appearance of hunting in their drawers. His boots had not been “put straight” after the crumpling and creasing they had got in his “bags;” consequently there were divers patches of blacking transferred to the tops, while sundry scrapings of putty, or of some other white and greasy matter, appeared on the legs. Independently of this, the tops retained lively evidence of their recent scouring in the shape of sundry up and down strokes, like the first coat of whitewashing, or what house-painters call “priming,” on a new door.

Dumpling’s appearance in the street was the signal for many who were still at their breakfasts to bolt the last bits of muffin, drink up their tea, and straddle into the passage to look for hats, gloves, and whips. Doors opened, and sportsmen emerged from every house. Round-the-corner Smith’s roan mare, with a hunting-horn at the saddle bow, had been making the turn of Hookem’s library for ten minutes and more; and the stud of Lieutenant Wheeler, the flash riding-master—seven “perfect broke horses for road or field,” with two unrivalled ponies—had passed the Dragon for the eight Miss Mercers and their brother Tom to go out upon to “see the hounds.” Then sorry steeds, with sorrier equipments, in the charge of very sorry-looking servants, paced up and down High Street, Paradise Row, and the Crescent; and a yellow fly, No. 34, with red wheels, drove off with Dumpling’s nondescript servant on the box, and the three Miss Dobbses, and Mother Dobbs, in scarlet silk pelisses, with sky-blue ribbons and handkerchiefs, inside. Jaded young ladies, whose looks belie their assertions, assure their mammas that they are not in the “least tired,” step into flys and drive away through High Street, kissing their hands, bowing and smiling, right and left, as they go.

Abel Snorem, having purchased a pair of new top-boots,

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appears in the sky-blue coat, lined with pink silk, and the canary-coloured shorts of the previous evening, looking very much like a high-sheriff's horse *footman* going out to meet the judges. Not meaning to risk his neck, although booted, he makes the fourth in a fly with Mr. and Miss Mordecai, and fat old Mr. Guzzle, who goes from watering-place to watering-place trying the comparative merits of the waters in restoring appetite after substantial meals : he looks the picture of health and apoplexy. Mrs. Barnington's dashing yellow barouche comes hurrying down the street, the bays bearing away from the pole, and the coachman's elbows sticking out in a corresponding form. Of course all the flies, horses, and passengers that are not desirous of being driven over by "John Thomas," the London coachman, are obliged to get out of the way as fast as they can, and he pulls up with a jerk, as though he had discovered the house all of a sudden. Out rush two powdered flunkies in red plush breeches, pink silk stockings, and blue coatees, when, finding it is only their *own* carriage, a dialogue ensues between them and Mr. Coachman, as the latter lounges over the box and keeps flanking his horses to make them stand out and show themselves.

A few minutes elapse, and out comes the portly butler, with a "*Now then ! Missis coming down !*" whereupon the Johnnies rush to their silver-laced hats on the hall table, seize their gold-headed canes, pull their white Berlins out of their pockets, and take a position on each side of the barouche door. Mrs. Barnington sails majestically downstairs, dressed in a sky-blue satin pelisse, with a sky-blue bonnet, lined with pink, and a splendid white feather, tipped with pink, waving gracefully over her left shoulder. She is followed by Barnington and Doleful, the former carrying her shawl and reticule in one hand, and his own hunting-whip in the other. Barnington, as usual, is well-dressed, having on a neat-fitting, single-breasted scarlet coat, with a blue collar, and rich gilt buttons, sky-blue cravat, canary-coloured waistcoat, well-cleaned leathers and gloves, and exquisitely polished boots, with very bright spurs. Doleful, who is rather in disgrace, for having introduced a partner to one

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of the three Miss Dobbsses overnight, and has just had a wigging for his trouble, sneaks behind, attired in a costume that would have astonished Tom Rounding himself, at the Epping Hunt. It consists of an old militia coat, denuded of its facings and trappings, made into a single-breasted hunting-coat, but, for want of cloth, the laps are lined, as well as the collar covered, with blue; his waistcoat is pea-green, imparting a most cadaverous hue to his melancholy countenance, and he has got on a pair of old white moleskin breeches, sadly darned and cracked at the knees, Hessian boots, with large tassels, and black heel spurs. He carries his hat in one hand, and a black gold-headed opera cane in the other, and looks very like an itinerant conjuror. What strange creatures *fine* women sometimes fancy!

Mrs. Barnington steps listlessly into the carriage, throws herself upon the back seat, while Barnington and Doleful deposit themselves on the front one; the door is shut with a bang, the "Johnnies" jump up behind, "*whit*" cries the coachman to his horses, off they go, the fat butler, having followed them up the High Street with his eyes, closes the door, and away they bowl at the rate of twelve miles an hour, round the Crescent, through Jireth Place, Ebenezer Row, Apollo Terrace, past the Archery Ground, and Mr. Jackson's public gardens, and along the Appledove Road, as far as the Mount Sion turnpike-gate—leaving pedestrians, horsemen, and vehicles of every kind immeasurably in the distance.

At the gate a crowd is assembled—Jones Deans, the "pike-man," has wisely closed the bar, and "*No trust*" stands conspicuously across the road. As the carriage approaches, it is thrown wide open; off goes Jones's hat. Mrs. Jones Deans drops a hasty curtsy, that almost brings her knees in contact with the ground, and the little urchins on the rails burst into an involuntary huzza. John Thomas cuts on, and turns at a canter into the grass-field on the left of the road, where poor Peter has been walking his hounds about for the last hour or more. What a crowd! Grooms of every description, with horses of every cut and character, moving up and down, and

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across and around the field; some to get their horses' coats down, others to get their legs down, a few to get their horses' courage down, others to try and get them up: some because they see others do it, and others because they have nothing else to do.

There are thirteen frys full of the young ladies from Miss Prim's and Miss Prosy's opposing seminaries, the former in sky-blue gingham, the latter in pink; Mrs. Fleeceall driven by her dear Fleecey, with a new hunting-whip, in a double-bodied one-horse "chay" with four little Fleecealls stuck in behind; Mr. Davey, the new apothecary, with his old wife, in a yellow dennet drawn by a white cart-mare; Mr. and Mrs. Hookem of the library in Jasper Green the donkey driver's best ass-cart; Farmer Joltem in his untaxed gig, with his name, abode, and occupation painted conspicuously behind; old Tim Rickets, the furniture broker, in a green garden chair drawn by a donkey; the postman on a mule, Boltem, the billiard-table keeper, and Snooks his marker, in an ass-phaeton; Donald McGrath, "Squire Arnold's" Scotch gardener, on "Master George's pony;" and Sam Finch, the keeper, and Thomas, the coachman, on the carriage-horses.

Enveloped in a large dirty old macintosh, in a single-horse fry, with a dirty apology for a postilion on the animal, with hands stuffed into his front pockets, and a hunting-whip peeping above his knees, the mighty Dennis O'Brian wends his way to the meet, his brain still swimming with the effects of the last night's champagne. As he diverges from the road into the grass-field, he takes his hunting-whip from its place, loosens the thong, and proceeding to flagellate both rider and horse, dashes into the crowd in what he considers quite a "bang-up way." "Now, Peter, my boy!" he roars at the top of his voice, as standing erect in the vehicle he proceeds to divest himself of his elegant "wraprascal," "be after showing us a run; for by the piper that played before Moses, I feel as if I could take St. Peter's itself in my stride! Och, blood and 'ounds! ye young spalpeen, but you've been after giving that horse a gallop—he's sweating about the ears already," he

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exclaims to a little charity-school boy, whom the livery-stable keeper has despatched with a horse Dennis has hired for the "sason," warranted to hunt four days a week or oftener, and hack all the rest—a raw-boned, broken-kneed, spavined bay, with some very going points about him. "Be after jumping off, ye vagabond, or I'll bate you into a powder."

Romeo Simpkins then comes tip-tup-ing up on a long-tailed dun, with a crupper to the saddle, surrounded by the four Miss Merrygoes, all ringlets and teeth, and the two Miss Millers, all forehead and cheeks—the cavalcade mounted by the opposition riding-master, Mr. Higgs, who follows the group at a respectful distance to see that they do not take too much out of the nags, and to minute their ride by his watch. Romeo is in ecstasies! He has got on an ill-made, cream-bowl-looking cap, with a flourishing ribbon behind, a very light-coloured coat, inclining more to pink than scarlet, made of ladies' habit-cloth, a yellow neckcloth, his white waistcoat of the previous evening, and very thin white cord breeches that show his garters, stocking tops, and every wrinkle in his drawers; added to which, after a fashion of his own, his boots are secured to his breeches by at least half a dozen buttons, and straps round the leg. The ladies think Romeo "quite a dear," and Romeo is of the same opinion.

"Now, Barnington, don't ride like a fool and break your neck," says the amiable Mrs. Barnington to her sapient spouse, as he begins to fidget and stir in the carriage as the groom passes and repasses with a fine brown horse in tip-top condition, and a horn at the saddle—a request that was conveyed in a tone that implied, "I hope you may with all my heart." Then turning to Doleful, who was beginning to look very uneasy as mounting time approached, she added, in a forgiving tone, "Now, my dear Captain, don't let Barnington lead you into mischief; he's a *desperate* rider, I know, but there's no occasion for you to follow him over everything he chooses to ride at."

Mrs. Barnington might have spared herself the injunction, for Doleful's horse was a perfect antidote to any extravagance; a



DOLEFUL BEGINS TO FEEL UNEASY.

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more perfect picture of wretchedness was never seen. It was a long, lean, hide-bound, ewe-necked, one-eyed, roan Rosinante, down of a hip, collar-marked, and crupper-marked, with conspicuous splints on each leg, and desperately broken-kneed. The saddle was an old military brass-cantrelled one, with hair girths, rings behind, and a piece of dirty old green carpet for a saddle-cloth. The bridle was a rusty Pelham, without the chain, ornamented with a dirty faded yellow-worsted front, and strong, cracked, weather-bleached reins, swelled into the thickness of moderate traces—with the head-stall ends flapping and flying about in all directions, and the choak-band secured by a piece of twine in lieu of a buckle. The stirrups were of unequal lengths, but this could not be helped, for they were the last pair in Handley Cross; and Doleful, after a survey of the whole, mounts and sticks his feet into the rusty irons, with a self-satisfied grin on his spectral face, without discovering their inequality.

“Keep a good hold of her mouth, sir,” says the flyman groom, whose property she is, gathering up the reins and placing them in a bunch in Doleful’s hands; “keep a good hold of her head, sir,” he repeats, an exhortation that was not given without due cause, for no sooner did the mare find herself released from her keeper than down went her head, up went her heels, off went the Captain’s hat, out flew the militia coat laps, down went the black gold-headed cane, and the old mare ran wheelbarrow fashion about the field, kicking, jumping, and neighing, to the exquisite delight of the thirteen flyfuls of pink and blue young ladies from Miss Prim’s and Miss Prosy’s opposition seminaries, the infinite satisfaction of Mrs. Fleeceall, whom Doleful had snubbed, and to the exceeding mirth of the whole field.

“*Help him! save him!*” screams Mrs. Barnington, with clasped hands and uplifted eyes, as the old mare tears past the barouche with her heels in the air, and the loose-riding M.C. sitting like the “Drunken Hussar” at the Circus, unconsciously digging her with his black heel-spurs as she goes. “Oh heavens! will nobody save him?” she exclaims; and thereupon



THE MASTER OF THE CEREMONIES MOUNTED.

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the two powdered footmen, half dying with laughter, slip down from behind and commence a pursuit, and succeed in catching the mare just as she had got the Master of the Ceremonies fairly on her shoulders, and when another kick would have sent him over her head. Meanwhile Mrs. Barnington faints. Fans, water, salts, vinegar, all sorts of things are called in requisition, as may be supposed, when the Queen of Handley Cross is taken ill; nothing but a recommendation from the new doctor that her stays should be cut could possibly have revived her.

Peace is at length restored. Doleful, sorely damaged by the brass cantrel and the pommel, is taken from the "old kicking mare," as she was called at the stable, and placed alongside the expiring Mrs. Barnington in the carriage, and having had enough of hunting, Mr. John Thomas is ordered to drive home immediately.

Whereupon Peter takes out his watch and finds it exactly five minutes to one, the hour that he used to be laying the cloth for Michael Hardey's dinner, after having killed his fox and got his horses done up. Barnington having seen his wife fairly out of sight, appears a new man, and mounting his brown hunter takes his horn out of the case, knocks it against his thigh, gives his whip a flourish, and trots up to the pack, with one foot dangling against the stirrup iron.

Peter salutes him with a touch of his cap, his groom whipper-in scrapes his against the skies; and Barnington, with a nod, asks Peter what they shall draw? "Hazleby Hanger, I was thinking, sir," replied Peter with another touch; "the keeper says he saw a fox go in there this morning, and it's very nice lying."—"Well then, let us be going," replies Barnington, looking around the field.—"No!" roars Stephen Dumphling, taking a cigar from his mouth; "Hoppas Hays is the place; the wind's westerly"—wetting his finger on his tongue, and holding it up to the air—"and if we can force him through Badger Wood and Shortmead, he will give us a rare burst over Langley Downs, and away to the sea."—"Well, what you please, gentlemen," replies Peter; "only we have not much time to lose, for the days are short, and my fellow-servant here

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doesn't know the country; besides which we have five couple of young hounds out."—"I say Hazleby Hanger," replies Barnington with a frown on his brow, for he was unused to contradiction from any one but his wife.—"I say Hoppas Hays," replies Dumpling loudly, with an irate look, and giving his boot an authoritative bang with his whip.—"Well, gentlemen, whichever you please," says Peter, looking confused.—"Then go to Hazleby Hanger," responds Barnington. "*Hoppas Hays!*" exclaims Dumpling; "mind, Peter, *I'm* your master."—"No more than myself," replies Barnington, "and I find the whipper-in."—"Where's Smith?" shouts Dennis O'Brian, working his way into the crowd, with his coat-pockets sticking out beyond the cantrel of his saddle, like a poor man's dinner wallet. "Here! here! here!" responded half a dozen voices from horses, gigs, and flies.

"No, *Round-the-corner* Smith I mean," replies O'Brian. "Yonder he is by the cowshed in the corner of the field," and Smith is seen in the distance in the act of exchanging his hack for his hunter. He comes cantering up the field, feeling his horse as he goes, and on being holloaed to by some score of voices or more, pulls short round and enters the crowd at a trot. "What shall we draw first, Smith?" inquires Mr. Barnington; "I propose Hazleby Hanger." "I say Hoppas Hays," rejoins Dumpling.—"Ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-zleby Ha-ha-hanger, or Ho-ho-ho-ho-hoppas Ha-ha-ha-ha-hays! I should think Fa-fa-fa-farley Pa-pa-pasture better than either." "Well then, let us draw lots," replied Dennis O'Brian, "for it's not right keeping gentlemen and men of fortune waiting in this way. By the great gun of Athlone, but the Ballyshannon dogs, kept by Mr. Trodennick, would find and kill a fox in less time than you take in chaffing about where you'll draw for one! See now," added he, pulling an old Racing Calender out of his capacious pocket, and tearing a piece into slips, "here are three pieces of paper; the longest is for Hazleby Hanger, the middle one is Hoppas Hays, and the short one shall be Farley Pasture, and Peter shall draw," whereupon Dennis worked his way through the crowd, advanced into the middle of the pack, and just as

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Peter drew a slip, Dennis's spavined steeplechaser gave Abelard, the French poodle, such a crack on the skull as killed him on the spot. The field is again in commotion; two-thirds of the young ladies in pink ginghams burst into tears, while one of the sky-blue pupils faints, and a second is thrown into convulsions and bursts her stays with the noise of a well-charged twopenny cracker. "*Who-hoop!*" cries Dennis O'Brian, "here's blood already!" jumping off his horse and holding the expiring animal in mid-air; "Who-hoop, my boys, but we've begun the season gallantly! killed a lion instead of a fox!" and thereupon he threw the dead dog upon the ground amid the laughter of a few pedestrians, and the general execration of the carriage company.

We need not say that the sport of the ladies was over for the day. There lay poor Abelard, the only dog in the pack they really admired, whose freaks and gambols, in return for buns and queen-cakes, had often beguiled the weariness of their brothers' kennel lectures. The sparkling eye, that watched each movement of the hand, was glazed in death, and the flowing luxuriance of his well-combed mane and locks clotted with gory blood—Alas, poor Abelard!

"Oh name for ever sad! for ever dear!
Still breathed in sighs, still ushered with a tear."

The hounds alone seemed unconcerned at his fate, and walked about and smelt at him as though they hardly owned his acquaintance, when "Mr. Fleeceall," the white terrier with the black patch on his eye, having taken him by the ear, with the apparent intention of drawing him about the field, Miss Prim most theatrically begged the body, which was forthwith transferred to the bottom of her fly, to the unutterable chagrin of Miss Prosy, who was on the point of supplicating for it herself, and had just arranged a most touching speech for the occasion. Eyes were now ordered to be dried, and the young ladies were forthwith got into marching order. Pink ginghams wheeled off first, and when they got home, those that did not cry before were whipped, and made to cry after; while

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the sky-blue young ladies had a page of Sterne's "Sentimental Journey," commencing "Dear sensibility! source unexhausted of all that's precious in our joys or costly in our sorrows!" &c., to learn by heart, to make them more feeling in future.

The field, reduced one-half, at two o'clock set off for Farley Pasture; the procession consists of five flies, twenty-three horsemen, four gigmen, and a string of thirteen donkeys, some carrying double, and others with panniers full of little folk.

Dumpling and Barnington look unamiable things at each other, but neither having carried his point, they ride along the sandy lane that leads to the cover in pouting sullenness. The cavalcade rides the hill that commands the cover in every quarter, where Peter and the pack wait until the long-drawn file have settled themselves to their liking. The cover is an unenclosed straggling gorse of about three or four acres in extent, rising the hill from a somewhat dense patch of under-wood, bounded on the east by a few weather-beaten Scotch firs, the country around being chiefly grass fields of good dimensions. Dumpling canters round the cover, and takes a position among the firs, while Barnington plants himself immediately opposite, and Smith, determined not to be outdone in importance, establishes himself to the south. "*Yooi in there!*" cries Peter at last, with a wave of his cap, his venerable grey hair floating on the breeze; "*yooi in there, my beaulies!*" and the old hounds, at the sound of his cheery voice, dash into the gorse and traverse every patch and corner with eagerness. "Have at him there!" cries Peter, as Belmaid, a beautiful pied bitch, feathers round a patch of gorse near a few stunted birch and oak trees; "*have at him there, my beauty!*"—"yooi, wind him!" "yooi, push him!"

"*Talli-ho!*" cries Abel Snorem, in a loud, deep, sonorous voice from his fly, rubbing his eyes with one hand and raising his hat in the air with the other; "*talli-ho!* yonder he goes." "*It's a hare!*" exclaims Peter; "*it's a hare! Pray hold your tongue, sir! pray do!*"—It is too late; the mischief is done. Three couple of young hounds that did not like the gorse,

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having caught view, dash after her, and puss's screams at the corner of the ploughed field are drowned in the horns of the masters, who commenced the most discordant *tootlings*, puffings, and blowings, as soon as Abel Snorem's talli-ho was heard. Meanwhile the whipper-in has worked his way round to the delinquents, and jumping off his horse, seizes the hind-quarters of puss, whereupon Vigilant seizes him *à posteriori* in return, and makes him bellow like a bull. The masters canter round, the field rush to the spot, and all again is hubbub and confusion. "Lay it into them!" exclaims Barnington to his groom whipper-in; "cut them to ribbons, the riotous brutes!" "Don't!" interposes Dumpling, "*I won't* have the hounds flogged;" whereupon the ladies laud his feeling, and mutter something that sounds very like "Barnington and brute." Just as stuttering Smith is in the midst of a long string of stammers upon the question of corporeal punishment, a loud, clear, shrill talli-ho is heard proceeding from the neighbourhood of the fir trees, and Peter on the white horse is seen standing in his stirrups, cap in hand, holloaing his hounds away to their fox.—"Hoic together, hoic!" and the old hounds rush eagerly to the voice that has led them to a hundred glories.—"Yonder he goes by Mersham Hatch, and away for Downleigh Crag," exclaims a lad in a tree, and eyes are strained in the direction that he points.

"Forrard away! forrard." "Crack! crack!" go a score of whips; "talli-ho!" scream a dozen voices. "Away! away! away!" holloas Peter, settling himself into his saddle. "Away! away! away!" echoes the groom whipper-in, as he stands rubbing himself, debating whether to mount or go home to the doctor. Barnington races round the cover, Dumpling takes the opposite side, followed by Smith, and Dennis O'Brian shoves his spavined steed straight through the cover, and goes bounding over the high gorse like a boat off a rough shore. Romeo Simpkins and his tail trot after a fat old gentleman on a black cob, dressed in a single-breasted green coat, with mahogany-coloured top-boots, and a broad-brimmed hat, who makes for Ashley Lane, from thence over Downley Hill, from

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whence there is a full view of the pack running like wildfire over the large grass enclosure near Ravensdeen village, with no one but Peter within a quarter of a mile of them. Away they speed; and just as Peter's white horse looks like a pigeon in the distance, and the rest diminish into black specks, a curve to the left brings them past Arthingworth clump, leaving the old tower on the right, and, skirting the side of Branston Wood, far in the distance, they enter upon the tract of chalky land beyond. The old gentleman's eye catches fresh fire at the sight; he takes off his low-crowned hat, and mops his bald head with a substantial snuff-coloured bandana, and again bumps off at a trot. He pounds along the lanes, turning first to the right, then to the left; now stopping to listen, now cutting through the backs of farm-buildings, now following an almost imperceptible cart-track through a line of field-gates, until he gains Surrenden Lane, where he pulls up short and listens. "Hark!" he exclaims, holding up his hand to Romeo and his female friends, who are giggling and tittering at the delightful canter they have had; "hark!" he repeats, in a somewhat louder voice. A short sharp chirp is borne on the breeze; it is Heroine all but running mute. A deeper note follows—another, and another, which gradually swell into chorus as the pack carry the scent across the fallow, and get upon turf nearer hand. The old gentleman is in ecstasies. He can hardly contain himself. He pulls his cob across the lane; his hat is in the air; no one views the fox but himself; the hounds pour into the lane; a momentary check ensues. Villager speaks to it in the next field; Dexterous has it too—and Coroner, Harmony, Funnylass, and Ravenous join cry!—they run the hedgerow—a snap and crack is heard just by the large ash-tree. "*Whoo-whoop!*" holloas the old gentleman, putting his finger in his ear, and Peter comes bounding over the fence, and is among his pack fighting for the fox.

Then up come the field, the horses heaving, panting, and blowing, all in a white lather, and the perspiration streaming off the red faces of riders. There has been a desperately jealous tussle between Barnington and Dumpling which should

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ride first, and nothing but the badness of the start has prevented their being before the hounds. Dumpling has knocked in the crown of a new eight-and-sixpenny hat, while a strong grower that he bore before him through a stiff bullfinch returned with a switch across Barnington's nose, that knocked all the skin off the bridge.

"I claim the brush!" exclaimed Dumpling, still in the air. "No such thing!" responds Barnington, as they land together in the deep lane, from the top of the high bank with a strongly pleached hedge on the top. "I say it's mine!" "I say it isn't!" "I say it is!" "Peter, it's mine!" "Peter, it isn't!" "At your peril give it to him!" "You give it to me, or I discharge you!"

"Well, gentlemen," replies Peter, laying the fox before him, "whichever way you please." "Then, give it me." "No, give it me." "Isn't it mine, sir?" says Dumpling, appealing to the gentleman on the cob. "My horse touched ground first, and, according to all the laws of steeplechasing that ever I've heard, or read of in 'Bell's Life' or elsewhere, that's decisive." "I should say it was Squire Hartley's," observed Peter, looking at the green-coated gentleman on the cob.

"Squire Hartley's!" exclaim Dumpling and Barnington at the same moment; "Squire Hartley's! How can that be? He's not even a member of the hunt, and doesn't give a farthing to it." "It was his cover we found in," replies Peter; "and in old master's time we always gave the brush to whoever was first up." "*First up*," roars Dumpling, "why, he's never been out of a trot!" "And ridden the road!" adds Barnington. "What do we know about your old master?" rejoins Dumpling. "He was a skirting, nicking, Macadamizing old screw." "He was a better sportsman than ever you will be," replies Peter, his eyes sparkling anger as he spoke. "Let us have none of your impertinence," replies Barnington, nettled at the disrespect towards a member of the committee; "and let me advise you to remember that you hunt these hounds for the amusement of your masters, and not for your own pleasure, and you had better take care how you steal away with your

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fox again as you did just now.” “That he ha-ha-ha-had,” exclaims Round-the-corner Smith, as he creeps down the side of the bank, holding by the pommel of his saddle, into the lane, after having ridden the line with great assiduity without seeing a bit of the run. “I never saw such an impudent thing done in all the whole course of my li-li-li-life before.”

Poor Peter made no reply. An involuntary tear started into the corner of his eye, when, having broken up his fox, he called his hounds together and turned his horse's head towards home, at the thought of the change he had lived to see. Arrived at Handley Cross, he fed his hounds, dressed his horse, and then, paying a visit to each of his masters, respectfully resigned the situation of “huntsman to the committee of management of the Handley Cross Fox Hounds.”

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CHAPTER VI.

THE CLIMAX OF DISASTER



FELLOW feeling makes us wondrous kind," says the adage, and the present case was no exception to the rule. Our three masters, having slept on their visit from Peter, met the next morning, when all jealousies were merged in abuse of the huntsman.

He was everything that was bad, and they unanimously resolved that they were extremely lucky in getting rid of him. "Anybody could hunt a pack of hounds," and the only difficulty they anticipated was the possibility of the groom whipper-in not being sufficiently recovered from his bite from the hound to be able to take the field on the Friday, for which day the hounds were advertised to meet at Meddlingley, three miles down the vale, in the cream of their country. Barnington would have no difficulty in hunting them if any one would whip-in to him; Dumpling was equally confident; and Smith said he had no "he-he-he-he-si-tation about the matter." It was therefore arranged that each should lend a hand, and hunt, or turn the hounds, as occasion required, and let the world at large, and Peter in particular, see what little occasion they had for his services. Meanwhile Beckford, Cook, Scrutator, and others, were perseveringly studied.

Friday came, but like an old "Oaks day" it was very languid and feeble; there was no polishing of hack hunters, no borrowing of bridles or lending of saddles, no bustle or hurry perceptible in the streets; the water-drinkers flocked to the wells as usual, and none but the regulars took the field. Among the number

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was our old friend Squire Hartley on his black cob, attired in the same green coat, the same brown top-boots, and the same low-crowned hat as before. Snorem and Doleful came in a gig in the inspection style, and Dennis O'Brian smoked three cigars before any one looked at his watch to see how the time went.

At length Squire Hartley ventured to inquire if there was any possibility of the servant having mistaken his way, whereupon it simultaneously occurred to the trio that there might be something wrong. Joe had orders to bring the hounds by an unfrequented lane, so as to avoid collecting foot-people, and after another quarter of an hour spent in suspense, the field proceeded in the direction they ought to come. On rising a gentle eminence out of Sandyford Lane, a scarlet-coated man was seen in the distance standing in the middle of a ploughed field, and a fustian-coated horseman was galloping about it, endeavouring to turn the hounds to the former, but in consequence of riding at them instead of getting round them, he made the hounds fly in all directions. The cavalcade then pressed on, horns were drawn from their cases, and our three masters cantered into the field, puffing and blowing most unsatisfactory and discordant blasts. Joe then disclosed how the pack had broke away on winding a dead horse hard by, and how, after most ineffectual efforts to turn them, he had lent a countryman his horse and whip while he stood in the field holloaing and coaxing them away.

This feat being accomplished through the assistance of the field, the hounds, with somewhat distended sides, proceeded sluggishly to the cover. It was a long, straggling gorse on a hill side, with a large quarry hole at the far end, which, from long disuse, had grown up with broom, furze, and brushwood. The hounds seemed very easy about the matter, and some laid down, while others stood gazing about the cover. At length our masters agreed that it was time to throw off, so they began, as they had seen Peter, with a whistle and a slight wave of the hand, thinking to see the pack rush in at the signal—no such thing, however; not a single hound moved a muscle, and three

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or four of the young ones most audaciously sat down on the spot. The gentleman on the black cob smiled.

"*Yooi over there!*" cried Barnington, taking off his hat and standing erect in the stirrups.

"*Yooi over there!* get to cover, hounds, get to cover!" screamed whipper-in Joe, commencing a most furious onset among the sitters, whereupon some jumped and others crept into cover and quietly laid themselves down for a nap. Five or six couples of old hounds, however, that had not quite gorged themselves with horseflesh, worked the cover well; and, as foxes abounded, it was not long before our friend on the cob saw one stealing away up the brook that girded the base of the hills, which, but for his eagle eye, would have got off unperceived.

"Talli-ho!" cried the old gentleman at last, taking off his hat on seeing him clear of the cover, and pointing southwards in the direction of Bibury Wood, a stronghold for foxes.

"Talli-ho!" responded Barnington without seeing him. "Talli-ho!" re-echoed all the others without one having caught view—and the old gentleman, putting the cob's head straight down the hill, slid and crawled down to the brook followed by the field. Here with much hooping, holloaing, and blowing of horns, a few couple of hounds were enticed from the cover, and being laid on to the scent, dribbled about like the tail of a paper kite, taking precedence according to their several degrees. First old Solomon, a great black and white hound, with a strong resemblance to a mugger's mastiff, gave a howl and a towl; then Harmony chirped, and Manager gave a squeak, and old Solomon threw his tongue again, in a most leisurely and indifferent manner, causing some of the young hounds to peep over the furze bushes to see what was going on.

The run, however, was of short continuance. After crossing three grass-fields they came to a greasy fallow, across which the hounds were working the scent very deliberately, when up jumped a great thumping hare, which they ran into in view at the well at the corner. Our sportsmen were somewhat disgusted at this, but made the best of the matter, and laid the mishap to the charge of the horse in the morning.



THE COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT,

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After consuming another hour or two in drawing hopeless covers, and riding about the country, they entered Handley Cross just in full tide, when all the streets and shops swarmed with bright eyes and smart dresses, and each man said they had had a capital day's sport, and killed. After passing through the principal streets, the hounds and horses were dismissed, and the red coats were seen flitting about till dusk.

The next day, however, produced no change for the better, nor the following, nor the one after ; and the oftener they went, the wilder and worse the hounds became. Sometimes, by dint of mobbing, they managed to kill a fox, but hares much more frequently fell a prey to the renowned pack. At length they arrived at such a state of perfection that they would hunt almost anything. The fields, as may be supposed, soon dwindled down to nothing, and, what was worse, many of the visitors began to slip away from Handley Cross without paying their subscriptions. To add to their misfortunes, bills poured in apace for poultry and other damage, and every farmer's wife who had her hen-roost robbed laid the blame upon the foxes. Fleeceall had the first handling of the bills, but not being a man with a propensity for settling questions, he entered into a voluminous correspondence with the parties for the laudable purpose of proving that foxes did not meddle with poultry.

One evening as our masters returned home, quite dispirited after an unusually bad day, without having seen a fox—though the hounds had run into and killed a fat wether, and seized an old woman in a scarlet cloak—they agreed to meet after dinner to consider what was best to be done under the circumstances. On entering the room, which they did simultaneously, two letters were seen on the table—one, of small size, directed to “The Gentlemen Managers of the Handley Cross Hunt Ball and Supper,” containing, in a few laconic items, the appalling amount of £290 3s. 6d. for the expenses of the memorable ball-night. The other more resembled a Government-office packet than a letter, and was bound with red tape and sealed ;

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it was addressed to the "Honourable the Committee of Management of the Handley Cross Fox Hounds." Barnington, more stout-nerved than his colleagues, tore off the tape, when out of the envelope fell a many-paged bill, secured at the stitching part with a delicate piece of blue silk. The contents ran thus:—

THE HONOURABLE COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT OF THE HANDLEY CROSS FOX HOUNDS.

To WALTER FLEECEALL, *Dr.*

	£	s.	d.
Sept. Attending you by special appointment, when you communicated your desire of taking the Hounds	0	13	4
Considering the subject very attentively	1	1	0
Attending Capt. Doleful, M.C., at Miss Jelly's, the Pastry Cook's, conferring with him on the subject, when it was arranged that a Public Meeting of the Inhabitants should be called	0	13	4
Drawing notice of the same	1	1	0
Making two fair copies thereof	0	10	6
Posting same at Library and Billiard Room	0	6	8
Long attendance on Capt. Doleful, M.C., arranging preliminaries, when it was agreed that Mr. Barnington should be called to the chair	0	13	4
Communicating with Mr. Barnington thereon, and advising him what to say	1	1	0
Attending Meeting, self and clerk	1	10	6
Making speech on the merits and advantages of Fox-hunting (what you please)			
Making minute of the appointment of the committee of management	0	6	8
Attending Capt. Doleful, M.C., by especial appointment at Miss Jelly's, when it appeared advisable to conciliate the farmers; writing to Mr. Stephen Dimpling, requesting his attendance	0	6	8
Attending meeting when Mr. Dimpling's name was added to the committee, and title of hunt changed to "Handley Cross" Hounds	1	1	0
Making special minute thereof, and of appointment of self as secretary	0	10	6
Writing 353 letters soliciting subscriptions, inviting and exhorting gentlemen to become members of the hunt, describing the uniforms—scarlet coats with blue collar in a morning, and sky-blue coats, lined with pink silk, canary-coloured shorts, and white silk stockings in an evening (letters very long and very pressing)		25	0 0
Carried forward.	£34	15	6

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	£	s.	d.
Brought forward . . .	34	15	6
Writing 129 rejoinders to 129 answers from 129 gentlemen who did not readily come into the thing, pointing out the merits and advantages of fox-hunting in general, and of the Handley Cross fox-hunt in particular	10	0	0
Seven gentlemen refusing to subscribe on the grounds that the hounds would hunt hare, drawing long and special affidavit that they were true to fox and would not look at hare	2	2	0
Attending swearing same, and paid for oaths	0	6	8
Three gentlemen refusing to become members unless the hounds were allowed to run hare occasionally, writing to assure them their wishes would be complied with	1	1	0
Mr. Spinnage having written to say he could not subscribe unless they occasionally hunted stags, writing to assure him that they were stag-hounds quite as much as fox-hounds	0	6	8
Mrs. Margery Mumbleby having sent in a bill of 1 <i>l.</i> 8 <i>s.</i> 6 <i>d.</i> for four hens, a duck, and a goose, stolen by the foxes, consulting sporting records to see whether foxes were in the habit of doing such things, engaged all day, and paid Mr. Hookem, the librarian, for searching through his Sporting Works	2	2	0
Writing Mrs. Margery Mumbleby very fully thereon, and stating my firm conviction that it was not the foxes (copy to keep)	0	13	4
Mrs. Margery Mumbleby not being satisfied with my answer, drawing case for the opinion of the Editor of the "Field; or, Country Gentleman's Newspaper," three brief-sheets	1	11	6
Paid carriage of parcel and booking	0	3	4
Paid him and secretary	2	4	6
Carriage of parcel back, containing Editor's answer, who said he had no doubt the foxes were "two-legged" ones.	0	3	0
Fair copy of answer for Mrs. Margery Mumbleby, and writing her fully thereon (copy to keep)	0	6	8
Hearing that Dennis O'Brian, Esq., was going to visit his castle in Ireland, calling at his lodgings to receive the amount of his subscription prior to his departure, when the maid-servant said her master was not at home			
Calling again, same answer			
Ditto ditto			
Ditto ditto			
Ditto ditto			
Ditto ditto, when the servant said Mr. O'Brian had left this morning			
Much mental anxiety, postage, parcels, letters, &c., not before charged (what you please)			
Total	£55	16	2

It is but justice to Mr. Fleeceall's accurate method of transacting business, to state that on the creditor side was 1*l.* 18*s.* for six subscriptions received, and a very *promising* list

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of gentlemen who had not yet found it convenient to pay, amounting in the whole to some 300*l*.

The two bills, however, sealed the fate of the committee of management, and drove the slaughtered wether and scarlet-cloaked old woman of the morning out of their recollections.

Shocked at his situation, Stephen Dumpling took the white-legged chestnut to Duncan Nevin, but though that worthy admitted that he was varry like the field, neither his long tail, nor his flowing mane, would induce him to offer more than twenty-five pounds for him.

"I really have more horses than I can do with," repeated Mr. Nevin; "had you come last week, or the week afore, I had three gentlemen wanting horses for the season, and I could have given you more, for I should have got him kept till April, and there may be a vast of frost or snow before then, but it would not do for me to have him standing eating his head off; you know I've nothing to do with the weather," added he, "when they are once let." Had Duncan known how things stood, he would not have offered him more than ten.

Fortunately for Stephen, Smith and Barnington being both in high credit, the chestnut was saved from the "Nimrod livery and bait stables." Still the committee was at an end, and that soon became known. "Who now was to take the hounds?" was the universal inquiry, which no one could answer. The visitors looked to the townspeople to make the move, and the townspeople wished to give them precedence. With the uninitiated, the main qualification for a master appears to be "plenty of money." With them the great sporting objection of "he knows nothing about hunting," is unheard of.

The case was urgent and the emergency great. None of the committee would touch again, and there was no engagement to hunt out the season. Puff paragraphs were tried in the "Handley Cross Paul Pry," a gossiping publication, which enlivened the list of arrivals, departures, changes of residence, parties given, &c., with what it called the "sports of the chase," but without success. Some, to be sure, nibbled, and made inquiries as to expense and subscription, but their ultimatums

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were always in the negative ! Sky-blue coats and pink linings were likely to be at a discount.

In the midst of the dilemma, Captain Doleful's anxious mind, quickened by self-interest, hit upon a gentleman made for the place—rich as Cræsus, a keen and scientific sportsman—an out-and-out lover of hunting—everything in fact that they wanted. His face wrinkled like a Norfolk biffin with delight, and he summoned Fleeceall, Hookem the librarian, Boltem the billiard-table keeper, to Miss Jelly's, where over a tray of hot mutton pies, most magnanimously furnished at his own expense, he arranged the scheme disclosed in the following chapter.

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CHAPTER VII.

MR. JORROCKS.

“ A man he was to all the country dear.”



“ HERE can that be from, Binjamin ? ” inquired Mr. Jorrocks of his boy of all-work, as the latter presented him with a large double-headed letter, with a flourishing coat of arms seal.

Mr. Jorrocks was a great city grocer of the old school, one who was neither ashamed of his trade, nor of carrying it on in a dingy warehouse that would shock the managers of the fine mahogany-countered, gilt-canistered, puffing, poet-keeping establishments of modern times. He had been in business long enough to remember each succeeding lord mayor before he was anybody—“ reg’lar little tuppences in fact,” as he used to say. Not that Mr. Jorrocks decried the dignity of civic honour, but his ambition took a different turn. He was for the field, not the forum.

As a merchant he stood high—country traders took his teas without tasting, and his bills were as good as bank notes. Though an unlettered man he had great powers of thought and expression in his peculiar way. He was “ highly respectable,” as they say on ‘Change—that is to say, he was very rich, the result of prudence and economy—not that he was stingy, but his income outstripped his expenses, and money like snow rolls up amazingly fast.

A natural born sportsman, his lot being cast behind a counter instead of in the country, is one of those frolics of fortune that there is no accounting for. To remedy the error of the blind

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goddess, Mr. Jorrocks had taken to hunting as soon as he could keep a horse, and though his exploits were long confined to the suburban county of Surrey, he should rather be "credited" for keenness in following the sport in so unpropitious a region, then "debited" as a Cockney and laughed at for his pains. But here the old adage of "where ignorance is bliss," &c. came to his aid, for before he had seen any better country than Surrey, he was impressed with the conviction that it was the "werry best," and their hounds the finest in England.

"Doesn't the best of everything come to London?" he would ask, "and doesn't it follow as a nattaral consequence, that the best 'unting is to be had from it?"

Moreover, Mr. Jorrocks looked upon Surrey as the peculiar province of Cockneys—we beg pardon—Londoners. His earliest recollections carried him back to the days of Alderman Harley, and though his participation in the sport consisted in reading the meets in a bootmaker's window in the Borough, he could tell of all the succeeding masters, and criticise the establishments of Clayton, Snow, Maberly, and the renowned Daniel Haigh.

It was during the career of the latter great sportsman, that Mr. Jorrocks shone a brilliant meteor in the Surrey hunt—he was no rider, but with an almost intuitive knowledge of the run of a fox, would take off his hat to him several times in the course of a run. No Saturday seemed perfect unless Mr. Jorrocks was there; and his great chestnut horse, with his master's coat-flaps flying out beyond his tail, will long be remembered on the outline of the Surrey hills. These are recollections that many will enjoy, nor will their interest be diminished as time throws them back in the distance. Many bold sportsmen now laid on the shelf, and many a bold one still going, will glow with animation at the thoughts of the sport they shared in with him.

Of the start before daybreak—the cries of the cads—the mirth of the lads—the breakfasts at Croydon—the dear "Derby Arms"—the cheery Charley Morton, then the ride to the meet—the jovial greeting—the glorious find, and the exhilarating scrambles up and down the Surrey hills.—Then if they killed!



JOHN JORROCKS OF GREAT CORAM STREET.

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—O, joy! unutterable joy! How they halloaed! How they hooped! How they lugged out their half-crowns for Tom Hill, and returned to town flushed with victory and *eau-de-vie*!

But we wander—

When the gates of the world were opened by railways, our friend's active mind saw that business might be combined with pleasure, and as first one line opened and then another, he shot down into the different countries—bags and all—Beckford in one pocket—order book in the other—hunting one day and selling teas another. Nay, he sometimes did both together, and they tell a story of him in Wiltshire, halloaing out to a man who had taken a fence to get rid of him, “Did you say *two* chests o’ black and *one* o’ green?”

Then when the Great Northern opened he took a turn down to Peterborough, and emboldened by what he saw with Lord Fitzwilliam, he at length ventured right into the heaven of heavens—the grass—or what he calls the “cut ’em down” countries. What a commotion he caused! Which is Jorrocks? Show me Jorrocks! Is that old Jorrocks! and men would ride to and fro eyeing him as if he were a wild beast. Gradually the bolder ventured a word at him—observed it was a fine day—asked him how he liked their country? or their hounds. Next, perhaps, the M. F. H. would give him a friendly lift—say “good morning, Mr. Jorrocks”—then some of what Jorrocks calls the “hupper crusts” of the hunt would begin talking to him, until he got fairly launched among them—when he would out with his order book and do no end of business in tea. None but Jorrocks & Co.’s teas go down in the midland counties. Great, however, as he is in the country, he is equally famous in London, where his “Readings in Beckford” and sporting lectures in Oxendon Street procured him the attentions of the police.

Mr. Jorrocks had now passed the grand climacteric, and balancing his age with less accuracy than he balanced his books, called himself somewhere between fifty and sixty. He wouldn’t own to three pund, as he called sixty, at any price. Neither could he ever be persuaded to get into the scales to see whether he was nearer eighteen “stun” or twenty. He



Mr. Torrocks starting for "The, put me down Countries."

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was always "ticularly engaged" just at the time, either goin' to wet samples of tea with his traveller, or with some one to look at "an 'oss," or, if hard pressed, to take Mrs. J. out in the chay. "He didn't ride stipple chases," he would say, "and wot matter did it make 'ow much he weighed? It was altogether 'twixt him and his 'oss, and weighin' wouldn't make him any lighter." In person he was a stiff, square-built, middle-sized man, with a thick neck and a large round head. A woolly broad-brimmed lowish-crowned hat sat with a jaunty sidelong sort of air upon a bushy nut-brown wig, worn for comfort and not deception. Indeed his grey whiskers would have acted as a contradiction if he had, but deception formed no part of Mr. Jorrocks's character. He had a fine open countenance, and though his turn-up nose, little grey eyes, and rather twisted mouth were not handsome, still there was a combination of fun and good-humour in his looks that pleased at first sight, and made one forget all the rest. His dress was generally the same—a puddingey white neckcloth tied in a knot, capacious shirt frill (shirt made without collars), a single-breasted high-collared buff waistcoat with covered buttons, a blue coat with metal ones, dark blue stockingnet pantaloons, and hessian boots with large tassels, displaying the liberal dimensions of his full, well-turned limbs. The coat pockets were outside, and the back buttons far apart.

His business place was in St. Botolph's Lane, in the city, but his residence was in Great Coram Street. This is rather a curious locality,—city people considering it west, while those in the west consider it east. The fact is, that Great Coram Street is somewhere about the centre of London, near the London University, and not a great way from the Euston station of the Birmingham railway. Jorrocks says it is close to the two best cover hacks in the world, the Great Northern and Euston stations. Approaching it from the east, which seems the proper way of advancing to a city man's residence, you pass the Foundling Hospital in Guildford Street, cross Brunswick Square, and turning short to the left you find yourself in "Great Coram Street." Neat unassuming houses form

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the sides, and the west end is graced with a building that acts the double part of a reading-room and swimming-bath; "literature and lavement" is over the door.

In this region the dazzling glare of civic pomp and courtly state are equally unknown. Fifteen-year-old footboys in cotton velveteens and variously fitting coats being the objects of ambition, while the rattling of pewter pots about four o'clock denotes the usual dinner hour.—It is a nice quiet street, highly popular with Punch and other public characters. A smart confectioner's in the neighbourhood leads one to suppose that it is a favourite locality for citizens.

We may as well introduce the other inmates of Mr. Jorrocks's house, before we return to our story, premising that they are now going to act a prominent part.

Mrs. Jorrocks, who, her husband said, had a cross of blood in her, her sire being a gent, her dam a lady's-maid, was a commonish sort of woman, with great pretension, and smattering of gentility. She had been reckoned a beauty at Tooting, but had outlived all save the recollection of it. She was a dumpy figure, very fond of fine bonnets, and dressed so differently, that Mr. Jorrocks himself sometimes did not know her. Her main characteristics were a red snub nose, a profusion of false ringlets, and gooseberry eyes, which were green in one light and grey in another.

Mr. Jorrocks's mother, who had long held a commission to get him a wife, had departed this life without executing it; and our friend soon finding himself going all wrong in his shirts and stocking-feet, and having then little time to go a courting, just went, hand over head as it were, to a ball at the Horns at Kennington Common, and drew the first woman that seemed inclined to make up to him, who chanced to be the now companion of his greatness.

No children blessed the union; and a niece, the orphan daughter of a brother of Mr. Jorrocks, formed their family circle. Belinda Jorrocks was just entering upon womanhood—young, beautiful, and guileless. In person she was of the middle size, neither too slim nor too stout, but just of that plump



BELINDA JORROCKS.

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and pleasantly-rounded form that charms all eyes, whether admirers of the tall or short. Her light-brown silken hair clasped the ivory forehead of a beautiful oval face, while the delicate regularity of her lightly-pencilled eyebrows contrasted with the long rich fringe of her large blue eyes; rosy lips and pearly teeth appeared below her Grecian nose, while her clear though somewhat pale complexion brightened with the flush of animation when she spoke. Her waist was small, and her feet sylph-like.

"Where can this be from, Binjamin?" inquired Mr. Jorrocks, taking the letter before mentioned as he sat in his red morocco hunting-chair in the back drawing-room in Great Coram Street.

"'Andley Cross! Where is that?" said he, looking at the postmark. "Knows no one there, I think," continued he, cutting the paper on each side of the seal with a pair of large scissors kept in the capacious black inkstand before him. Having opened the envelope, a large sheet of white paper and a gilt-edged pink satin-paper note, headed with an embossed stag-hunt, presented themselves. He opened the note first. The writing was unknown to him, so he took up the other, and folding it out, proceeded to read the contents. Thus it ran:—

"TO JOHN JORROCKS, ESQ.

"HONOURED SIR,

"The committee of management of the Handley Cross fox-hounds being under the necessity of relinquishing their undertaking, we, the undersigned keen and determined sportsmen, having experienced the evils of a divided mastership, and feeling fully impressed with the importance of having a country hunted single-handed by a gentleman of known talent and experience, who will command the respect and obedience of his followers and the admiration of the world, look up to you, sir, as pre-eminently qualified for the distinguished, honourable, and much-coveted situation."

"My vig!" exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks, jumping from his chair, slapping his thigh, and hopping round the table, taking up three or four holes of his face with delight—"My vig! who would have ever thought of such a thing!—O, John Jorrocks!

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John Jorrocks! you are indeed a most fortunate man! a most lucky dog! O dear!—O dear! Was ever anything so truly delightful?" Some seconds elapsed ere our worthy friend could compose himself sufficiently to look again at the letter. At last he resumed:—

"When we consider, sir," it continued, "the brilliant position you have long achieved in that most illustrious of all hunts, 'The Surrey,' and the glorious character you have gained as an ardent admirer of field sports, we feel most deeply and sincerely sensible that there is no one to whom we can more safely confide this important trust than yourself."

"Capital! bravo! werry good indeed!" exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks, laying down the letter again for the purpose of digesting what he had read. "Capital indeed," he repeated, nursing one leg over the other, and casting his eyes up at a dirty fly-catcher dangling over his head. Thus he sat for some moments in mute abstraction. At length he let down his leg and took up the letter.

"In conclusion, sir," it ended, "we beg to assure you that you possess alike the confidence and esteem of the inhabitants of this town and neighbourhood; and in the event of your acceding to our wishes, and becoming the manager of our magnificent hunt, we pledge ourselves to afford you our most cordial and strenuous support, and to endeavour by every means in our power to make you master of the Handley Cross fox-hounds, at the smallest possible expense and inconvenience to yourself.

"(Signed),

"MISERRIMUS DOLEFUL, M.C.,

"*Captain half-pay.*

"DUNCAN NEVIN.

"ALFRED BOLTEM.

"SIMON HOOKEM.

"WALTER FLEECEALL.

"JUDAS TURNBILL.

"MICHAEL GRASPER."

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“Capital, indeed!” exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks, laying down the letter, clapping and rubbing his hands; “werry good indeed—most beautiful, in fact—wot honour I arrive at!—wonder what these chaps are now!” added he; saying which, in taking up the letter, his eye caught the pink satin paper note. It was in the same fine lady-like running hand as the letter, and purported to be from Captain Doleful, explanatory of their motives, and vouching for the respectability of himself and brother requisitionists. Mr. Jorrocks was all delight, and being the child of impulse and generous feelings, his joy found vent in stamping on the floor, thereby summoning his servant the aforesaid Benjamin into his presence.

Benjamin, or Bínjimin, as Mr. Jorrocks pronounced the name, was one of those mischievous urchins that people sometimes persuade themselves do the work of a man without the wages. He was a stunted, pasty-faced, white-headed, ginnified boy, that might be any age from eight to eighteen, and as idle and mischievous a brat as it was possible to conceive; sharp as a needle, and quick as lightning, he was far more than a match for his over easy master, whom he cheated and deceived in every possible way. Whatever went wrong, Benjamin always had an excuse for it, which generally transferred the blame from his own to some one else's shoulders,—a piece of ingenuity that required no small degree of dexterity, inasmuch as the light-porter of the warehouse, Betsey, a maid of all work, and a girl under her, were all he had to divide it among. Not a note came into the house, or a letter went out of it, but Benjamin mastered its contents; and Mrs. Jorrocks was constantly losing things out of the store-room and closets, which never could be traced to anybody.

One unlucky Sunday morning, indeed, Mr. Jorrocks happened to turn back suddenly on his way to church, and caught him sitting in his easy chair at the breakfast table, reading “Bell's Life in London,” and scooping the marmalade out of the pot with his thumb, when he visited Benjamin's back with a summary horse-whipping; but that was the only time, during a period of three years, that he ever was caught in

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a scrape he could not get out of. This might be partly attributable to Betsey finding it convenient to be in with Benjamin, who winked at the visits of a genteel young man from a neighbouring haberdasher's. The poor maid under Betsey, and the light-porter, who was generally absent, were therefore the usual scapegoats, or somebody else's servant who had happened to come with a message or parcel. Such was Mr. Jorrocks's domestic establishment, which, like most masters, he either thought, or affected to think, very perfect.

We left our friend stamping for Benjamin, who made his appearance as soon as he could slip downstairs and come up again, he having been watching his master through the keyhole since delivering the letter.

* * * * *

"Now, Binjimin," said Mr. Jorrocks, eyeing him with one of his benevolent looks, and not knowing exactly what to say; "now, Binjimin," he repeated, "are the 'osses all right?"

"Yes, sir, and the wehicle too."

"Werry good," replied Mr. Jorrocks—"werry good," taking a half-emptied pot of Lazenby's marmalade out of a drawer in his library table. "See now! there's a pot of marmeylad for you!"—(Mr. Jorrocks had the knack of making the most of what he did, and treated the half pot as a whole one)—"and mind be a good *bouy*, and I make no doubt you'll rise to be a werry great man—nothing gains man or *bouy* the respect and esteem of the world so much as honesty, sobriety, and cleanliness."

Mr. Jorrocks paused—he would have finished with a moral, wherein his own fortune should have furnished the example, but somehow or other, he could not turn it at the moment, so after scrutinizing Benjamin's dirty face for a second, he placed the marmalade pot in his hand, and said, "Now go and wesh your mug."

Uncommonly amiable and consequential was Mr. Jorrocks that morning. As he walked, or rather strutted into the city, he gave twopence to every crossing-sweeper in his line, from the black-eyed wench at the corner of Brunswick Square, to the

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breechless boy, with the red night-cap, at St. Botolph's Lane end; and he entered his dark and dingy warehouse with a smile on his brow, enough to illumine the dial of St. Giles's clock in a fog. Most fidgety and uneasy was he all the morning—every footfall made his eyes start from the ledger, and wander towards the door, in hopes of seeing some member of the Surrey, or some brother sportsman, to whom he might communicate the great intelligence. He went on 'Change with a hand in each breeches pocket, and a strut that plainly told how well he was to do with himself: still some dear-bought experience had given him a little prudence, and all things considered he determined to sleep on the invitation before he answered it.—Perhaps the pros and cons of his mind will be best displayed by a transcript of what he wrote—

“GENTLEMEN,

“I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your favour of the 4th, and note the contents, which I assure you is most grateful to my feelings: in all you have said I most cordially goinside.—It's pleasant to see humanity estimating one's value at the price one sets on oneself. I am a sportsman all over, and to the back-bone.—'Unting is all that's worth living for—all time is lost wot is not spent in 'unting—it is like the air we breathe—if we have it not we die—it's the sport of kings, the image of war without its guilt, and only five-and-twenty per cent. of its danger.

“I have no manner of doubt at all, that I'm fully qualified for the mastership of the 'Andley Cross fox-hounds, or any other—'unting has been my 'obby ever since I could keep an 'oss, and long before—a southerly wind and a cloudy sky are my delight—no music like the melody of hounds. But enough of the rhapsodies, let us come to the melodies—the £ s. d. in fact. Wot will it cost?—In course it's a subscription pack—then say how many *paying* subscribers have you? Wot is the *nett* amount of their subscriptions—how many couple of 'ounds have you? Are they steady? Are they musical? How many days a week do you want your country 'unted?

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Is stoppin' expensive? What 'un a country is it to ride over? Stiff, or light, or middlin', or what? Enormous, endless woodlands without rides, stiff wales with small enclosures and unreasonable raspers amid masses of plough; or pleasant copse-like covers, with roomy grass enclosures to reward the adventurous leaper with a gallop? Is it, in short, a country where a man can see 'ounds without zactly ridin' to tread on their tails? Are your covers wide of the kennel? Where is your kennel? I never heard of your 'ounds before—wot stabling have you? Is 'ay and corn costly? In course you'll have your stock of meal by you? Are there any cover rents to pay—and if so, who pays them? How are you off for foxes? Are they stout and wild, and like to take a deal o' killin', or jest a middlin' sort of hanimal that one may look to who-hoop-in pretty often? Write me fully—fairly—freely—frankly, in fact, and believe me to remain, gentlemen all, your's to serve,

“JOHN JORROCKS,

“GREAT CORAM STREET, LONDON.

“TO MISERRIMUS DOLEFUL, ESQ., M.C.,

“*Captain Half-pay,*

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* * * * *

“Well, come, this is more like business than any we have had yet,” observed Captain Doleful on reading the epistle—“though some of his questions will be plaguy troublesome to answer. What does he mean by ‘Are they steady?’—‘Are they musical?’ and as to the ‘stopping being expensive,’ of course that must depend a good deal upon how he lives, and whether he stops at an inn or not.—It’s a pity but I knew something about the matter, that I might make a satisfactory answer.”

Fleeceall had Blaine’s Encyclopædia of Rural Sports, but as he was rather too sharp, Doleful determined to try what they could do without him; accordingly, he concocted the following epistle, which having copied on to a sheet

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of sea-green paper, he sealed with yellow wax, and deposited it in the post :—

“DEAR MR. JORROCKS,

“Your kind and flattering letter has just come to hand, and I lose not a moment in supplying you with all the information in my power relative to our celebrated dogs. Unfortunately the secretary to the hunt, Mr. Fleeceall, is absent on urgent business, consequently I have not access to those documents which would enable me to answer you as fully as I could wish. The dogs, as you doubtless know, are of the purest blood, having been the property for many years of that renowned sportsman, Michael Hardey, and are bred with the very greatest care and attention. It is perhaps not going too far to say that there is not such another pack in the world. There are at present thirty-two couple of old ones in kennel, besides an excellent white terrier with a black eye. They are very steady and most musical. Their airing yard adjoins the Ebenezer Chapel, and when the saints begin to sing, the dogs join chorus. Handley Cross, where the kennel is situated, is in the most beautiful, fertile, and salubrious part of the country, within two miles of the Datton station of the Lilly-white-sand railway, and contains a chalybeate spa of most unrivalled excellence. The following is an accurate analysis of the water taken by an eminent French physician, who came all the way from Rheims for the express purpose of examining it :—

ONE PINT (Wine measure).

Sulphate of soda	21 grains.
Sulphate of magnesia	3½ ”
Sulphate of lime	4½ ”
Muriate of soda	9½ ”
Oxide of iron	1 ”
Carbonic acid	1½ ”

“To this unrivalled spring, invalids from every part of the world, from every quarter of the globe, flock in countless numbers; and it is unnecessary to point out to a sportsman

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like yourself either the advantages that a pack of hounds confer on such a place, or the benefits accruing to the master from having the support of men with whom, to use a familiar phrase, 'money is no object.' Indeed I think I may safely say, that keenness is all that is required, and a gentleman like you would meet with support that would galvanize your most sanguine expectations. You must excuse my saying more at present, as I have been out since daybreak, and there is a piece of cold roast beef standing before me at this moment, whose beautifully marbled side and rich yellow fat with a delicately browned outside, in conjunction with a crisp lettuce-salad in a china bowl, peremptorily order me to conclude, which I do with the earnest exhortation for you at once to declare yourself for the high honour of the mastership of the Handley Cross hounds. Believe me to remain in extreme hunger, dear Mr. Jorrocks, very sincerely yours,

"MISERRIMUS DOLEFUL, M.C.,

"Capt. Half-pay.

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"Dash my vig!" exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks, laying down the letter, "what prime beef that must be! By jingo I almost fancy I see the joint, with the nice, curly, crisp, brown 'orse radish sticking to it in all directions.—I knows nothing better than *good* cold roast, tinged with red from the gravy in the centre.—Doleful must be a trump—feel as if I knew him. Keen fellow too—Peep-of-day boy.—Dare say he found the fox by the drag—Oh, vot joy is that! Nothing to compare to it.—Might as well have told me more about the 'ounds too," he observed, as a glimmering of caution shot across his mind.—"Should like to have a fair black and white understanding what they are to cost. I'm rich to be sure, but then a man wot's made his own money likes to see to the spending of it."

Thereupon Mr. Jorrocks stuck his hands under his coat-laps

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and paced thoughtfully up and down the apartment, waving them sportively like the tail of a dolphin. Having pulled his wig about in all directions, he at last composed himself at his table, and drew up the following reply :—

“DEAR DOLEFUL,

“Your agreeable favour has come to hand, and werry pleasant it is. It appears to be directed to two points—the salubriosity of 'Andley Cross, and the excellence of the 'ounds. On the first point I'm content. I make no doubt the water's capital. Please tell me more about the 'ounds and country—are you quite certain that people will not be backward in comin' forward with the coin? I've lived a goodish while i' the world—say a liberal alf under'd—and I've never yet found money good to get. So long as it consists of pen, ink, and paper work, it comes in like the hocean; many men can't 'elp puttin' their names down in subscription lists, specially when payin' time's far off, just as others can't help noddin' at auctions, but confound it, when you come to gather in the doits, there's an awful fallin' off. Now I think that no one should be allowed to hoop and holloa, or set up his jaw, wot hasn't paid his subscription. Howsomever, you should know best; and suppose now, as you seem full of confidence, you underwrite me for so much, cordin' to the number of days you want the country 'unted.

“Turn this over in your mind, and let me know what you think of it; also please tell me more about the 'ounds and the country, for, in fact, as yet I knows nothin'. Are there many old 'ounds in the pack? Are there many young ones to come in? What size are they? Are they level? Do they carry a good head? Have they plenty of bone? Cook says a weedy 'ound is only fit to 'unt a cat in a kitchen—I says ditto to that. What sort of condition are they in? Can they trot out fifteen miles or so, 'unt and come back with their sterns up, or do they whiles tire afore the foxes? How are you off for foxes? Are they ringers or straight runners? A ringer is only a hare with



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a tail to it. Do you ever hunt a bagman? Again I say, write to me without reserve—quite freely, in fact, and believe me, &c.

“Your’s to serve,

“JOHN JORROCKS,

“GREAT CORAM STREET, LONDON.

“TO MISERRIMUS DOLEFUL, ESQ., M.C.,

“*Capt. Half-pay,*

“HANDLEY CROSS SPA.”

This letter was a poser, for the worthy M.C. had no notion of running risks, neither had he the knowledge necessary for supplying the information Mr. Jorrocks required; still he saw the absolute necessity of persevering in the negotiation, as there was no probability of any one else coming forward. In this dilemma, it occurred to him that a bold stroke might be the policy, and obviate further trouble.

Accordingly he wrote as follows:—

“DEAR MR. JORROCKS,

“Yours is just received. I was on the point of writing to you when it came. A rival has appeared for the mastership of the hounds: a great Nabob with a bad liver, to whom the doctors have recommended strong horse-exercise, has arrived with four posters, and an influential party is desirous of getting the hounds for him. Money is evidently no object—he gave each postboy a half-sovereign, and a blind beggar two-and-sixpence. I have protested most strongly against his being even *thought* of until your final decision is known, which pray give immediately, and, for your sake, let it be in the affirmative. I can write no more—my best energies shall be put in requisition to counteract the sinister proceedings of others. Pray write immediately—no time is to be lost. In the greatest haste,

“Faithfully yours,

“MISERRIMUS DOLEFUL, M.C.,

“*Capt. Half-pay.*

“TO JOHN JORROCKS, ESQ.,

“GREAT CORAM STREET,

“LONDON.”

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This letter was a sad puzzler to our worthy friend. In his eyes a mastership of fox-hounds was the highest pinnacle of ambition, and the situation was the more desirable inasmuch as he had about got all the trade he could in the "cut-me-down" countries, and, shame to say, they had rather put him out of conceit of the Surrey. Still, long experience had tinctured his naturally ardent and impetuous mind with some degree of caution, and he felt the importance of having some sort of a bargain before entering upon what he well knew was an onerous and expensive undertaking. The pros and cons he weighed and turned over in his mind, and the following letter was the result of his cogitations:—

"DEAR DOLEFUL,

"I will candidly confess that to be a master of fox-hounds, or M. F. H., would be a werry high step in the ladder of my hambition, but still I should not like to pay too dear for my whistle. I doesn't wish to disparage the walue of your Nabob, but this I may say, that no man with a bad liver will ever make a good 'untsman. An 'untsman, or M. F. H., should have a good digestion, with a cheerful countenance, and, moreover, should know when to use the clean and when the dirty side of his tongue—when to butter a booby, and when to snub a snob. He should also be indifferent as to weather; and Nabobs all come from the east, where it is werry 'ot—all sunshine and no fogs.

"Again, if I am right, they hunt the jackall, not at all a sportin' animal, I should say, from the specimen in the Zoologicals. Still, as I said before, I doesn't wish to disparage the value of your Nabob, who may be a werry good man, and have more money and less wit than myself. If he is to have the 'ounds, well and good—I can go on as I 'ave been doing, with the glorious old Surrey, and an occasional turn with the 'cut-me-downs.' If I'm to have them, I should like to know a little more about the £ s. d. Now, tell me candidly, like a good fellow, without any gammon, wot you think they'll cost, and wot can be raised in the way of subscription. Of course, a

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man that's raised to the lofty position of an M. F. H. must expect to pay something for the honour ; and so far from wishing to live out of the 'ounds, I am well disposed to do what is liberal, but then I should like to know the extent of my liability. Dignity, in my mind, should not be too cheap, but betwixt you and I and the wall I rayther mistrust a water-drinker. To be sure there be two sorts o' water-drinkers : those that drink it to save the expense of treating themselves with aught better, and those wot undergo water for the purpose of bringin' their stomachs round to stand summut stronger. Now, if a man drinks water for pleasure, he should not be trusted, and ought to be called upon for his subscription in advance ; but if he drinks water because he has worn out his inside by strong libations, in all humane probability he will be a goodish sort of fellow, and his subscription will be underwritten for a trifle. All this may be matter of no moment to a Nabob, but to a man vot's risen from indigence to affluence by the unaided exertions of his own head, it is of importance ; and I should like to know werry particularly how many of the subscribers are woluntary water-drinkers, and how many are water-drinkers from necessity.

“ I am, as you doubtless know, a great grocer and tea merchant, dealin' wholesale and retail, importing direct from China, which I suppose will be the country your Nabob comes from ; and unfortunately at the present writing my junior partner, Simon Simpkins, senior, is on a trading tour, and I can't well be wanted at the shop, otherwise I would run down and have a personal interview with you ; but I had a letter this morning from Huddersfield, in which he says he will be back as on Friday at farthest ; therefore as the season is spending, and the 'ounds should be kept going, I could, should your answer be agreeable, run down on the Saturday and make arrangements for taking the field immediately. Of course I presume there is everything ready for the purpose, and a mounted master is all wot is wanted. I only keep two 'osses—what the lawyers call *qui tam*'ers—‘ 'osses that ride as well as drive,’ and they would only do for my own riding. I have also

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a sharp London lad, who has been with me in the 'cut-me-downs,' who might make a second whip; and my establishment consists of Mrs. Jorrocks, my niece, Belinda, Betsay, the maid, and Binjamin, the boy. Of course, Mrs. J., as the wife of the M. F. H., would expect all proper attention.

"I shall want a comfortable house to accommodate this party, and if I could get one with stabling attached, it would be agreeable. Perhaps you may know something of the sort, the willa style would be agreeable. I think that's all I've got to say—indeed, I haven't paper for more, so shall conclude for self and partners,

"Your's to serve,

"JOHN JORROCKS.

"TO MISERRIMUS DOLEFUL, Esq., M.C.,

"HANDLEY CROSS SPA."

Doleful was in ecstasies when he got this letter, for he plainly saw the Nabob had told upon Mr. Jorrocks, and that he was fairly entering the meshes of his net. The letter, indeed, was unexceptionable, save the mention of his avocation of a grocer, which Doleful determined to keep to himself, merely announcing him as a gentleman of large fortune, whose father had been connected with trade. Recollecting that Diana Lodge was to let, he forthwith secured the refusal of it at three guineas a week, and calling on Fleeceall, concocted a most flattering list of subscribers and members of the hunt, which he forwarded to Mr. Jorrocks with the following letter:—

"DEAR MR. JORROCKS,

"By the greatest good luck in the world, Diana Lodge, within a stone's throw of the kennel, came vacant this morning, and not having the slightest doubt that on inspection of the accompanying list of subscribers to the hounds and members of our celebrated hunt, which you will see by the letters A. and B. prefixed to their names, contain very few of those most horrible characters water-drinkers from choice, you will

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immediately accept the honourable office of 'Master,' I have engaged it for you at the very moderate rent of four guineas a week, *including everything*. It is a cottage ornée, as you say in France, entered by an ivy-covered trellis-work arch, tastefully entwined with winter roses, now in full blow. In the passage is a highly-polished Honduras mahogany table on claw feet castors, for hats, whips, gloves, cigar-cases, &c. On the right is a dining-room of comfortable dimensions, with another Honduras mahogany table, capable of dining eight people, the orthodox size for a party, with a Honduras mahogany cellaret sideboard with patent-locks, and a dumb-waiter on castors. The carpet is a Turkey one, and the rug a Kidderminster, of a pattern to match the carpet. On the left of the passage is a drawing-room of the same size as the dining-room, furnished in a style of unparalleled elegance.

"The chairs, ten in number, are of massive imitation-rosewood, with beaded and railed backs and round knobs along the tops, and richly-carved legs. In the centre is a beautiful round imitation-rosewood table on square lion-clawed brass castors, and the edge of the table is deeply inlaid with a broad circle of richly-carved, highly-polished brass. Against the wall, below a costly round mirror, supported by a bronze eagle in chains, is a square imitation-rosewood table inlaid with satin-wood in lines, containing two drawers on each side, with ivory knobs for handles. The carpet is a fine flowered pattern, richer than anything I can describe, and the whole is wonderfully complete and surpassingly elegant.

"There are four bedrooms, and a dressing-room which holds a bed, and a kitchen, back-kitchen, scullery, pantry, and other conveniences. To the back is a nice little outlet of a quarter of an acre, laid out in the style of the Jardin des Plantes at Paris; and there is a splendid old patriarch of a peacock, that struts about the walls, spreads his tail, and screams delightfully. In short, it appears to me to have been built with an eye to the residence of a master of hounds.

"And this leads me to tell you that the Nabob has been to the kennel, attended by two Negroes, one of whom held a large

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green parasol over his head to protect him from the sun, while the other carried a Chinchilla, fur-lined, blue silk cloak to guard him from the cold. I hear he talked very big about tiger-hunting and elephant-riding, and said the waters here had done his liver a vast deal of good. I may observe that it is possible an attempt may be made by a few troublesome fellows to place him at the head of the establishment, particularly if you any longer delay appearing among us. My advice to you therefore is, to place yourself, your amiable lady, and accomplished niece, with your servants, horses, &c., on the mid-day Lilly-white-sand train, on Friday next, and make a public entry and procession from the Datton station into Handley Cross, showering halfpence among the little boys as you go. I will take upon myself to muster and marshal such a procession as will have an imposing appearance, and the Nabob will be a very bold man if he makes any attempt upon the hounds after that.

“I need not say that your amiable lady will receive from me, as M.C. of Handley Cross, all those polite attentions that are invariably paid by all well-bred gentlemen in the dignified situation I have the honour to hold, more particularly from those bearing Her Majesty’s Commission in the Army; and in the table of precedence among women that I have laid down for the regulation of the aristocratic visitors of Handley Cross Spa, the lady of the M. F. H. comes on after the members of the Royal Family, and before all bishops’ wives and daughters, peeresses, knights’ dames, justices’ wives, and so forth. Expecting then to meet you at the Datton station on the Lilly-white-sand Railway, at three o’clock on Friday next, and to have the supreme felicity of making the personal acquaintance of a gentleman who so worthily fills so large a space in the world’s eye, I have the honour to subscribe myself, with humble respects to the ladies, dear Mr. Jorrocks,

“Faithfully yours,

“MISERRIMUS DOLEFUL, M.C.,

“Capt. Half-pay.”

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And Jorrocks seeing there was as much chance of getting information by correspondence as there was of getting the truth by interrogatories in the days of old Chancery suits, determined to stand the shot, and wrote to say that henceforth they might append the magic letters, M. F. H., to his name. And forthwith he became so inflated, that Great Coram Street itself could hardly hold him.

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CHAPTER VIII.

CAPTAIN DOLEFUL'S DIFFICULTIES.



WHAT a fuss there was preparing for Mr. Jorrocks's reception!—Captain Doleful was perfectly beside himself, and ran about the town as though he expected her Majesty. First he went to the proprietary school, and begged a half holiday for all the little boys and girls; next he visited Mr. Whackem's mathematical seminary, and did the like by his; Miss Prim and Miss Prosey both promised to "suspend the duties of their respective establishments" for the afternoon; and three infant schools were released from lessons all the day. "Jorrocks for ever," was chalked upon the walls, doors, and shutters; and little children sang out his name in lisping acclamations. Publicans looked cheerful, and livery stable keepers, ostlers, and helpers talked about the price of 'ay and corn. Sebastian Mello called a meeting of the Religious Freedom Society, who voted eight-and-twenty shillings for placarding the town with the following comfortable assurance—"FOX-HUNTERS WILL ALL GO TO —."

The banner with the fox upon it, and the "Floreat Scientia" scroll painted for the celebrated ball and supper, was released from the darkness of Mr. Fleeceall's garret, where it had been deposited after the entertainment, and mounted on poles to lead the way in the procession; while the milliners, mantua-makers, and tailors were severally called upon to contribute silk, calico, and bunting for flags, decorations, and ribbons. Whatever Doleful demanded was necessarily ceded, so absolute

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was his sway over the tradespeople at the Spa. He was indeed a very great man. Did a new cheesemonger, or a new hatter, or a new milk-woman, wish to settle in the place, the good-will of the M.C. was invariably to be obtained, else it was to little use their troubling themselves to come; and the perquisites and advantages derived from these sources made a comfortable addition to his yearly income, arising from the subscription book at the library. The musicians at the wells were also under his control, and of course they received intimations to be at the Datton station before the hour that Mr. Jorrocks had privately announced his intention to arrive.

The morning sun broke cheerfully through the clouds in a good, down-rightly, determined fine day, and as Doleful threw open the latticed casement of his window, and his eye roved to the "sun-bright summit" of the distant hills, he poured forth an inward ejaculation for the success of the great enterprise of the day, and for his own especial honour and emolument. In the midst of his reverie Jemima, the maid of all work and shop-girl of the house, tapped gently at his door, and handed in a three-cornered note written on pink satin highly-musked paper. Doleful started as though he had seen an apparition, for in the hand he immediately recognised the writing of his great patroness, Mrs. Barnington, and the recollection of Mrs. Jorrocks, the table of precedence among women, whereby the latter was to supplant Mrs. Barnington, the baits and lures he had held out for the purpose of securing the Jorrocks's, together with the honour he was then instigating the inhabitants to do Mr. J., all rushed upon his mind with terrible velocity. Nor did the contents of the note assuage the anguish of his mind. It was simply this: "Mrs. Barnington will thank Capt. Doleful to wait upon her at twenty-three minutes before eleven."

"Twenty-three minutes before eleven!" exclaimed the Captain, throwing up his hands, looking like a condemned criminal—"How *like* her that is! always peremptory with others and never punctual herself; well, there's no help for it. Jemima," exclaimed he, down the narrow staircase, to the girl who had returned to the shop, "my compliments to

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Mrs. Barnington, and say I will make a point of being with her at the time she names. I wonder," continued he to himself, pacing up and down his little bedroom in his dressing-gown and slippers, "what she can want—it must be about the Jorrocks's—and yet I could not do otherwise than I have. If she storms, I'll rebel, and trounce her for all her airs; by *Jove*, I will!" saying which, he clenched his fist, and looking in the glass, brushed up the few straggling hairs that marked the place for whiskers, and felt quite valiant. His, courage, however, rather oozed out of his finger ends as the appointed hour approached, and at twenty-one minutes before eleven by his watch, and twenty-two and a half by the church clock, he arrived at the door of his arbitrary and capricious patroness.

"Mistress is in her boudoir," said the consequential butler on receiving the Captain at the hands of the footman, "but I'll send up your name. Please step into the parlour," and thereupon he turned the Captain into the fireless dining-room, and closed the door upon him.

Towards twelve o'clock, just as the Captain's courage was nearly up again, and he had thrice applied his hand to the ivory knob of the bell-spring to see which way it turned against he wanted to ring, in strutted the butler again, with "Missis's compliments, sir, and is sorry she is indisposed at present, and hopes it will not be inconvenient to you to return at ten minutes before three."—"Ten minutes before three," exclaimed the Captain, as a tinge of colour rose to his pallid cheeks, "impossible!" said he, "*impossible!*" Then, recollecting himself, he desired the butler to return with his respects to Mrs. Barnington, and say that at any hour next day he would have great pleasure in waiting upon her, but that his time was completely bespoke for the whole afternoon. The butler forthwith departed, and in about three-quarters of an hour, during which time Mrs. Barnington had finished a nap on the sofa, and arranged an elegant *negligée* toilette wherein to appear, the butler returned, and with a bow and wave of his hand announced that "Missis would see the Captain," whom he preceded upstairs and handed over to Bandoline, the little French maid, stationed at the door,

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who ushered the Captain into the presence of Mrs. Barnington in the back drawing-room. She was lying in state on a costly many-cushioned crimson and gold ottoman, dressed in a fawn-coloured *robe de chambre*, with a rich white Cachmere shawl thrown carelessly about her legs, below which, her elegantly-formed feet in pink swan's-down-lined slippers protruded. Her morning cap of costly workmanship was ornamented and tied with broad satin cherry-coloured ribbons, which, with the colour of the ottoman and cushions, imparted a gentle hue to her clear but delicate complexion, and her bright silky hair flowed in luxuriant tresses from the sides. She was a *malade imaginaire*-ist, having originally come as a patient of Swizzle's; but that roistering practitioner had grievously offended her by abruptly closing a long list of inquiries by replying to the question if he thought she might eat a few oysters, with "Oh, hang it, marm, yes—*shells and all!*" She was now pretending to read the "Handley Cross Paul Pry," while with her left hand she kept applying a costly gold vinaigrette to her nose. The room was a mass of jewellery, costly furniture, and expensive flowers.

"Good morning, Captain," said she, with the slightest possible inclination of her head—"Bandoline, set a chair," which she motioned the Captain to occupy, and the pretty little maid departed. "Pray," said she, as soon as the door closed, "what is the meaning of all this to-do about a Mr. Horrocks, that I read of in 'Paul Pry'?"

"Mr. Horrocks," replied the Captain, colouring, "really, marm, I don't know—it's the first time I've heard the name mentioned this long time,—there was a Mr. Horrocks lived in Silenus villa the year before last, but I understood he had gone back to India."

"Oh, no," replied Mrs. Barnington, "that's quite another person—these are Londoners—*trades*-people I hear, and the man Horrocks, the paper says, is to have the hounds."

"Oh," replied the Captain, now blushing to the very tips of his ears, "you've mistaken the name, marm. Yes, marm.—It's *Jorrocks*, marm—Mister Jorrocks of Great Coram Street, marm—a merchant prince, marm—at least his father was.



CAPTAIN DOLEFUL AND MRS. BARNINGTON.

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The present Mr. Jorrocks is a mighty sportsman, and hearing the hounds were without a leader, he wrote to offer himself, and some of the sporting gentry of the place have been in treaty with him to take them; but I need not tell you, Mrs. Barnington, that hunting is not an amusement I am partial to—indeed I hope I may never have occasion to go out again; but you know that as Master of the Ceremonies, I am obliged to countenance many things that I would gladly avoid.”

“True,” replied Mrs. Barnington, with a smile of approbation. “I thought *you* would not be likely to encourage vulgar people coming here merely because they don’t care for breaking their necks over hedges and ditches—but tell me, isn’t there a Mrs. Jorrocks?”

“I understand so,” replied the Captain, with a hem and a haw; “a lady of birth, they say; but had I known you would have interested yourself in the matter, I should certainly have informed myself so as to have been able to tell you all about her.”

“Oh dear no! *not for the world!*—whether as a lady of birth or a tradesman’s wife, it would never do for *me* to concern myself about them. *You* know my position here is not to be controverted by any interlopers, be they who they may, or come from where they will.”

“Undoubtedly not, marm,” replied the obsequious M.C.; “there’s not a person in the place insensible of the advantages of your presence; but I should hope—at least, perhaps I may venture to express a slight wish—that if those Jorrocks’s appear respectable people, you will for the sake of sociability vouchsafe them the favour of your countenance, and condescend to notice them a *little*.”

“I don’t know what to say about that, my dear Captain,” replied Mrs. Barnington, thoughtfully. “If they appear respectable people, and if they live in a certain style, and if I thought the matter would rest at Handley Cross, and they would not obtrude their acquaintance upon me elsewhere, and if they appeared sensible of the obligation, I might perhaps call upon them; but where there are so many points to consider,

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and so many to ascertain, it is almost needless speculating upon how one might act; all that we can do for the present is to maintain one's own consequence, and *you* know full well the only way to support a place like this is to uphold the dignity of the chief patroness."

"No doubt," replied Captain Doleful, with a half-suppressed sigh as the table of precedence among women came across his mind. "I am sure, Madam, I have always been most anxious to pay you every respect and attention in my power, and if I have failed it has been owing to the multiplicity of my engagements and duties, and not from any want of inclination on my part."—"I'm sure of it, Captain; and now let us see you back here at dinner at ten minutes past six."—"With pleasure," replied the Captain, rising to depart, with a grin of satisfaction on his melancholy visage.

"Stay one moment," resumed Mrs. Barnington, as the Captain was leaving the room. "The paper says these people arrive to-day. If you chance to see them or can find anything out about them, you know, well and good—perhaps *Mr.* Barnington might like to know."—"By all means," replied the obsequious M.C., backing courtier-like out of the room, and nearly splitting himself up with the now opening door.

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CHAPTER IX.

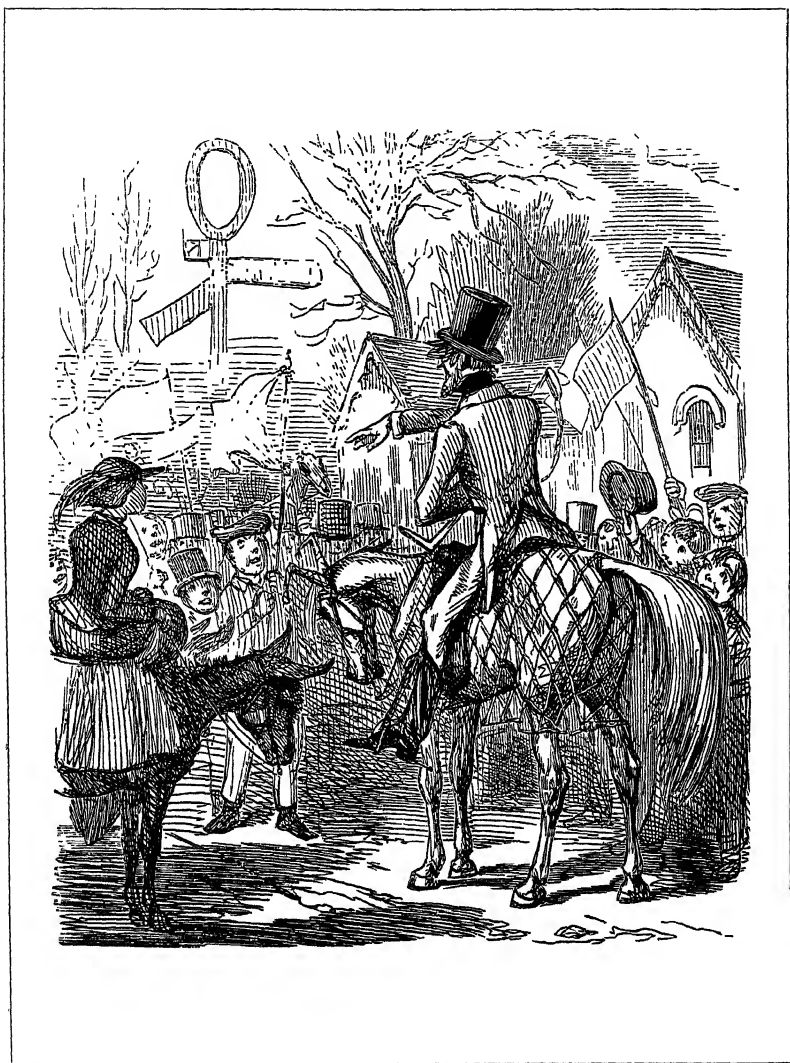
THE CONQUERING HERO COMES.



THE clear bright beauty of the day, combined with the attraction of a stranger coming to fill so important a situation as master of fox-hounds, drew many to the Datton Railway station who were previously unacquainted even with the name of "Jorrocks"; though it is but right to state that the ignorant portion consisted principally of the fair sex, most men, whether sportsmen or not, having heard of his fame and exploits.

All the flies, hack horses, donkeys, and ponies were bespoke as usual, and many set out at noon to secure good berths at the station. Precisely at two o'clock Captain Doleful appeared at Miss Jelly's door, attired in a dress that would puzzle the "property man" of a theatre. It was nearly the same as he exhibited himself in on the memorable opening day of the committee of management—the old single-breasted militia coat, denuded of its facings and trappings, with a sky-blue collar and sky-blue linings, and a short, shrivelled, buff kersey-mere waistcoat, with mother-of-pearl buttons, old white mole-skin breeches, well darned and patched at the knees, and badly-cleaned Hessian boots and black heel spurs. His hands were covered with a pair of dirty-white kid gloves, and in his right one he carried a large hunting-whip. An oilskin-covered hat, secured to a button-hole of his waistcoat by a yard of sky-blue penny ribbon, completed the rigging of this sporting dandy.

Having withdrawn his countenance and custom from Sam



CAPTAIN DOLEFUL, M.C.

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Slickem after the affair of the kicking mare (the effect of which had been considerably to impoverish Mr. Sam), of course all the other proprietors of hack horses were on the alert to please the great M.C., and on this day he was mounted by Duncan Nevin on his white mare, Fair Rosamond, who was generally honoured by carrying pretty Miss Lovelace, once the head beauty of the place—but who being unable to ride this day, it came into the hands of the Captain.

To make the mare more complete, although in winter time, its ears were decorated with white fly-nets and dangling tassels, and from the saddle hung a large net of the same colour and texture, with a broad fringe, completely covering her hind quarters and reaching below her hocks.

Doleful eyed the whole with a grin of satisfied delight, and never did field-marshal mount his charger for review with a more self-complacent air than sat upon the brow of this distinguished character. Having steadied himself in his stirrups, and gathered up the reins, he cast an eye between the barley-sugar and cake cans in Miss Jelly's window, and hissing at the mare through his teeth with a jerk of the reins, went off in a canter. A rare-actioned beast it was, too! Up and down, up and down, it went, so light and so easy, and making so little progress withal, that Ducrow himself might have envied the possession of it.

Thus Doleful went tit-tup-ping along through the silent streets, to the infinite delight of all the Johns and Jennies, who were left to flatten their noses against the windows during their masters' and mistresses' absence, and here and there exciting the anger of a butcher's dog, or farmer's cur, that flew at the mare's heels with an indignant bark as she passed.

Having timed himself to a nicety, our gallant M.C. arrived at the station just as the last fly and flight of donkeys drew up outside the iron railing that runs along the railroad from the station-house, and, in the absence of Mr. Jorrocks, of course, he was the object of attraction. "Good morning, Captain Doleful," exclaimed a dozen sweet voices from all sorts of

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vehicles, for women will toady a Master of Ceremonies, be he what he may; and thereupon the Captain gave one of his feature-wrinkling grins, and raised his oilskin-covered hat as high as the yard of penny ribbon would allow, while all the little boys and girls, for whom he had obtained half-holiday, burst into loud acclamations, as they stood or sat on Lily-white-sand barrels, hazel bundles, and other miscellaneous articles waiting for conveyance by the railway. "Now, children, mind, be orderly, and attend to what I told you," said the Captain, eyeing his juvenile friends as though he were marshall-ing them for a quadrille. "It now wants but ten minutes to the coming of the train, so be getting yourselves in order; unfurl the flags; and you, musicians," turning to the promenade band, who were hard at work with some XX, "be getting your instruments ready, to welcome Mr. Jorrocks with 'See the conquering hero comes!'" As the minutes flew, the scene became more inspiring. Eyes were strained up the railway in the direction he was to come, and ears were opened to catch the first sound of the engine. All was anxiety and expectation. Hope and fear vacillated on every countenance. "Should he not come, what a bore!" "Oh, but he's certain to arrive, and Mrs. Jorrocks too; arn't they, Captain?" The Captain looked thoughtful and mysterious, as all great men should, but deigned no reply.

Precisely at three-quarters of a minute before three, a wild shrill whistle, that seemed to issue from the bowels of the earth and to run right up into mid-air, was heard at the back of Shavington Hill, and, in an instant, the engine and long train rounded the base, the engine smoking and snorting like an exasperated crocodile. Nearer and nearer it comes, with a thundering sort of hum that sounds throughout the country. The wondering ploughman stops his team. The cows and sheep stand staring with astonishment, while the horses take a look, and then gallop about the fields, kicking up their heels and snorting with delight. The guard's red coat on the engine is visible—next his gold hat-band appears—now we read the Hercules on the engine, and anon it pulls up

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with a whiff, a puff, and a whistle, under the slate-covered shed, to give the Hercules his water, and set down and take up passengers and goods. Seven first-class passenger carriages follow the engine, all smart, clean, and yellow, with appropriate names on each door panel—The Prince Albert, Queen Victoria, and the Prince of Wales; The Venus, The Mercury, The Comet, and The Star; next come ten second-class ones, green, with covered tops, and half-covered sides, but in neither set is there anything at all like the Jorrocks party. Cattle-pens follow, holding sheep, swine, donkeys, and poultry; then came an open platform with a broken britzka, followed by a curious-looking nondescript one-horse vehicle, containing a fat man in a low-crowned hat, and a versatio or reversible coat, with the preferable side outwards. Along with him were two ladies, muffled up in cloaks, and at the back was a good-looking servant-maid. From the bottom of the carriage swung a couple of hams and a large warming-pan.

"Pray is Mr. Jorrocks here?" inquired the elegant M.C., who had persuaded the station-master to let him in upon the line, riding his white charger near the door of the first-class carriage, and raising his hat as he spoke; but getting no answer, he continued his interrogatory down the whole set until he came to the end, when casting a despairing glance at the cattle pens, he was about to wheel round, when the gentleman in the versatio coat, in a very stentorian voice, roared out, "I say, SIR! Baint this the 'Andley Cross station?"

"It is, Sir," replied Captain Doleful, in his most dignified manner; "the Datton station for Handley Cross, at least."

"Then I want to land," responded the same sweet voice.

"Here's a gentleman wants to be down," observed Captain Doleful to the scarlet-coated guard, who came bustling past with a pen of Cochin-Chinas to put upon the train.

"Yes, a gentleman and two ladies," roared our friend; "MISTER AND MISSIS JORROCKS in fact, and MISS JORROCKS!"

"Bless my heart," exclaimed Captain Doleful in ecstasies, "how delighted I am to see you! I really thought you were

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not coming," and thereupon the Captain raised his hat to the ladies and offered his hand most cordially to Mr. Jorrocks.

"What, you knows me, do you?" replied Mr. Jorrocks, with the sort of doubtful shake of the hand that a person gives when he thinks the next moment may discover a mistake. "You knows me, do you?" repeated he; "you have the advantage of me—pray who are *you*?"

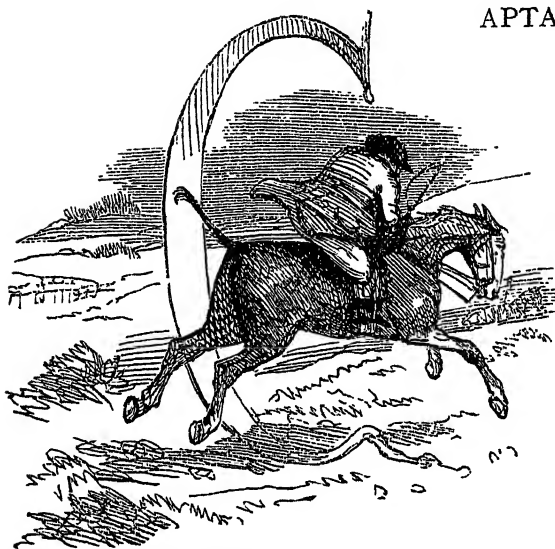
"Captain Doleful, M.C.," responded our worthy, presenting his glazed card to the ladies; and thereupon Mr. Jorrocks, with a chuckle on his good-humoured countenance, as he gazed at the Captain's incongruous habiliments, seized his hand and wrung it heartily, saying, "'Ow *are* ye, Doleful? 'Ow do ye do? Werry glad to see you—werry glad indeed. 'Ow's the Nabob?"

"Middling, thank you," replied the Captain, with a faint blush on his cadaverous countenance. "But hadn't you better alight and get your carriage and things off the train?" inquired he, glad to turn the conversation. "They'll be off with you if you don't mind," and thereupon the Captain beckoned the guard, and Mr. Jorrocks, standing up in the vehicle, looking very like a haystack with a hat on the top, bounded to the ground. Mrs. Jorrocks, in a black velvet bonnet lined with pink satin, and her body all shrouded in a sea-green silk cloak, then accepted the offer of the Captain's arm, and descended with caution and due state; while Belinda, with the spring of youth and elasticity in her limbs, bounded on to the footway beyond the rail. Benjamin, who was asleep in the horse-box, being considerably kicked awake by Mr. Jorrocks, the porters cut off the last joints of the train, when away it went, hissing and snorting through the quiet country, leaving our party to the undisturbed observation of the Handley Cross company.

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CHAPTER X.

THE CONQUERING HERO'S PUBLIC ENTRY.



"The Rat-tailed Brown."

APTAIN DOLEFUL,

leaving his charger in the care of a porter, now offered Mrs. Jorrocks his arm, and walked her off to the station house, followed by Jorrocks and Belinda, amid the observations and inquiries of the numerous party ranged

outside the barrier. The ladies being now left to arrange their toilettes, Jorrocks and Doleful joined arms in a most friendly manner, and strutted back to see about unloading the horses, the sack-like figure of the one contrasting with the thin, lathy, mountebank appearance of the other. This being accomplished, Ben proceeded to strip off his dirty white great-coat, and display his fine new sky-blue postillion jacket, patent cords and top-boots, while Jorrocks began expatiating to Doleful on the merits of the animals.

"This 'ere 'oss," says he, rubbing his hand up and down the

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Roman nose of a great rat-tailed brown, "I've ridden many seasons, and he's never given me but one fall, and that was more my fault than his. Indeed I may say it was mine entirely. 'Ow's this country off for foxes? Well, you see, I was chiveyin' this 'ere 'oss along like wildfire, for it was a most special fine scentin' day—breast-high all the way—and Tom Hills, that's our 'untsman, was ridin' wiciously venomous—by the way that reminds me, can you commend me to an honest man to buy my forage of? Well, we blazed down Windy Hill, and past Stormey Wood, just as though it were as level as this rally, when Joe Crane, thinkin' to gain a nick, turned for Nosterly, and Tom and I rode slap for Guilsborough, where he threw a shoe, and I was left alone in my glory. I know'd the country well, and sinkin' the hill, stole down Muddiford Lane, with the pack goin' like beans on my left, with only two men within a mile of them, barrin' a miller with his sacks, who rode uncommon galvanizingly.

"Well, thinks I to myself, if they turn by Gatton steep I'll have a nick, for though this 'oss was never *regularly* pumped out, yet times are when he'd be better of a little more wind, and so as I rode along peepin' over the 'edge, 'oping every minute to see old Barbican, who was leadin' the pack that day, give a bend to my side, ven vot should occur but a gipsy camp half across the lane, and three donkeys, two jacks and a jinney, huddled together in the other part so as to make a regular barrier, and, by the by, have you read 'Digby Grand'? Grand book it is; but, however, never mind that at present; well, we were close upon the camp and donkeys afore ever we saw them, for it was just at that sharp turn of the road where the waterin' trough is—confound them, they always place pikes and troughs in the hawkwardest places—and this 'oss, though with all his eyes about him, was so heager lookin' for the 'ounds that I'm dashed if he didn't come upon them so suddenly that he hadn't time to change his leg or do nothing, consequentially he dodged first among the gipsy bairns, putting his foot through a *sarcepan* the old father gipsy was a mendin', and then, fearing mischief, he flew to the left and cast me right on to the old jinney hass's back, who, risin' at the moment, finished the business by kickin'

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me off into the dirtiest heap of composition for turnips I ever smelt in my life—haw, haw, haw! I really think I wind it now. Still the 'oss is a good un—an undeniable good un. When he carries me well I axes three 'undred for him; at other times I'd take thirty. I never grudges money for 'osses. Des-say if all the money I've spent first and last were equally distributed among them they would stand me i' less nor forty pund apiece.

"This too's a *grand* nag!" continued he, taking hold of the ear of a stiff bay with white hind legs, and a bang tail—"good at everything—rides, drives, 'unts, and carries a 'ooman. I call him Xerxes, cause as how ven I drives two, as I'm a doin' to-day, he goes leader, and in course the brown, which I calls *Arter-Xerxes*, comes arter him! Both go like the vind—good 'osses! uncommon good! rough and strong as our four-shillin' tea.—Binjimin, mind the traces—and now be after puttin' too; your missis will be ready by the time we get all square"; and thereupon Mr. Jorrocks began fussing and busying himself with the horses and harness, and very soon had Xerxes and Arter-Xerxes in their proper places, "tandem fashion." The carriage was an old, low, open, double-bodied one, with red and black wheels, looking as much like a fire-engine as anything else, especially with the Westphalia hams and warming-pan swinging from the bottom like buckets. It held four comfortably, or five on a pinch, and the inmates were Mr. Jorrocks and his wife, Belinda, and Betsey. It was tremendously stuffed and hung about with luggage, and at the back was attached a most sporting package consisting of two saddles done up in horse-sheeting; and through the roller which fastened them to the carriage two stout hunting-whips and a new brass horn were thrust. All things being ready, Mr. Jorrocks gave Benjamin a "leg up" on to Xerxes, and gathering up the reins of his wheeler in a most workmanlike manner, stepped into the vehicle, and, preceded by Captain Doleful on the white charger, drove up to the station-house door, to the infinite delight of all the spectators outside the rails, amid the puffings, scrapings, and tootlings of the musicians, the pointing of children, the unfurling of flags, and general movement of the meeting.

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Mrs. Jorrocks and Belinda had improved the few minutes in the station-house, and with the aid of Betsey and a looking-glass had rectified the little disorders of the journey. Having cast her sea-green wrapper, Mrs. Jorrocks shone forth in a superb scarlet brocade pelisse, so bright and dazzling that even in Great Coram Street, or St. Pancras Church, it acted as a loadstone on the eyes of the beholders, and now in the quiet country was almost overpowering. She looked like a full-blown peony.

Belinda, the young, the fair, the beautiful Belinda, was the picture of innocence and health. Her large lustrous blue eyes, with their long silken lashes, shone "sweetly lambent" from beneath a drab silk drawn bonnet lined with blue, across which a rich black veil was thrown; a smile hovered round her ruby lips, disclosing the beautiful regularity of her pearly teeth; while the late rapid movement through the air, joined with the warmth of the station-house and the excitement of the scene, had imparted a slight flush to a delicate, but beautifully clear complexion. Her shining brown hair, drawn across her forehead in the Madonna style, was confined with a narrow band of blue velvet, while a rich well-fitting drab silk pelisse displayed the symmetry of her exquisitely-rounded figure. Her beautifully-formed feet were enclosed in well-fitting patent leather shoes, whose ties embraced well-turned ankles encased in well drawn up white gauze silk stockings.

The station-house and buildings concealing our party from view, Mr. Jorrocks had time to make those comfortable dispositions of the persons of his suite as are always desirable in public processions, but which are sometimes driven out of the heads even of the most experienced paraders by the inquisitive observations of many hundred eyes. He now took Belinda upon the draw-out seat between himself and Mrs. Jorrocks, while Betsey bundled in behind among Dundee marmalade, sugar loaves, Copenhagen cherry brandy, and other things. Having given a knowing cast over his left shoulder to see that she was right, Mr. Jorrocks cried out, "Now, Binjamin, follow the Captain," and giving Arter-Xerxes a touch with the point

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of the whip, passed from the screen formed by the station-house to the folding iron gates at the side, which being thrown open at the approach of the Captain, they made a splendid turn off the railway line into the crowded space outside. "Huzza! huzza! huzza! huzza! huzza!" exclaimed a hundred voices. "Huzza! huzza!" responded a hundred more amid the roll of drums, the puffing of the horns, the flapping of the flags, and the waving of handkerchiefs from those whose aristocratic ideas precluded the expression of clamorous applause. Doleful stopped Benjamin on the leader, and Mr. Jorrocks, pulling short up, stood erect in the vehicle, and taking off his low-crowned hat, bowed and waved it repeatedly to the company, while Mrs. Jorrocks acknowledged the compliment by frequent kisses of her hand, and Belinda's face became suffused with blushes at the publicity and novelty of her situation.—Having sufficiently exercised their lungs, hats began to rest upon their owners' heads, handkerchiefs were returned to their pockets, and amid a general buzz and exclamation of applause a rush was made at the carriage to get a closer view of Belinda.

"By Jove, what a beautiful girl!" exclaimed Captain Parkins (a new-comer) to his friend Mr. Dyneley, eyeing Belinda through his glass.

"Did you ever *see* such eyes?" inquired a second.

"Handsomest creature I ever beheld! Fine undulating figure!" observed a third.

"What a quiz the old girl is," remarked another.

"Is she her daughter?" inquired a third of Captain Doleful, who was busy marshalling the procession.

"Lots of money, I suppose!" said another.

"He looks like a rich fellow, with that queer-looking hat of his."

"The servant girl's not bad-looking."

"Miss for my money," said another. "I'm in love with her already."

"I wish she'd stand up and let's see her size."

"I lay a guinea she's a clipper."

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“There’s a hand ! I’ll be bound for it she has a good foot and ankle. None of your hairy-heel’d ones.”

“He looks like a jolly old dog,” observed another. “We shall have lots of good dinners, I daresay.”

Doleful’s face wrinkled into half its usual size with delight, for he plainly saw he had made a hit ; and most fortunate were those men who had cultivated his friendship through the medium of the subscription books at the libraries, for the two-guinea subscribers were immediately presented to the trio, while the guinea men were let in at intervals as the procession moved along the road. Nor should we omit to mention, for the instruction of all other M.C.’s, that thirteen new names were put down that evening, so that Doleful’s prospects were brighter than ever.

The first burst of applause having subsided, the party got settled into the order of the day, as laid down in the programme of the worthy M.C. First went the proprietary school children, eighty boys and a hundred and nine girls, three abreast, with sundry pocket-handkerchief banners. Next came the “Fox and Floreat Scientia” flag, on double poles so as to stretch across the road ; the musicians, two drummers, two horn-blowers, two fiddlers, and a fifer were planted behind it ; after which came three glazed calico flags, of various colours in stripes, followed by Whackem’s mathematical seminary, and the rabble at large. Then came another large double flag, in broad stripes of scarlet and white, with the words “JORROCKS FOR EVER !” done in blue letters ; Doleful’s own place was immediately after this, but of course, during the progress to Handley Cross, he kept alongside the carriage of the distinguished strangers. The flies, gigs, ponies, donkeys, chaises, &c. followed on in a long-drawn line, just as they could jostle in, for the Captain knew the high hedges on each side of the narrow road would do more towards keeping them in order than all the injunctions and remonstrances he could lay down or use.

Mrs. Jorrocks was delighted !—Never before did she think anything either of hunting or her husband, but now the former seemed a most delightful amusement, and Jorrocks appeared a

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perfect hero. He too was charmed with his reception, and grinned and nudged Belinda with his elbow, and cast a sly wink over his shoulder at Betsey, as they jumbled along the road, and the compliments of the crowd came showering among them. Then he turned his eyes up to heaven as if lost in reflection and bewilderment at the honour he had arrived at. Anon he caught the point of his whip and dropped it scientifically along Arter-Xerxes' side, then he began to whistle, when Captain Doleful, having resigned the side of the carriage on which Mrs. Jorrocks was sitting to Captain Parkins, came round to say a few nothings to our worthy friend.

"Well, Miserrimus," said Jorrocks, opening the conversation as though he had known him all his life, "you see I'm down upon you, as the extinguisher said to the rushlight—always say you carn't be too quick in catchin' a flea.—'Ow's the Nabob?"

"Middling, thank you," again replied the Captain. "*You're* looking uncommonly well, I'm sure," said he, eyeing Mr. Jorrocks as he spoke.

"Oh *me!*" replied Jorrocks, "bless you I'm never bad—never 'cept I gets a drop too much, as will happen in the best reglated families, you know, Miserrimus." Whereupon Mr. Jorrocks, with a knowing grin, gave Doleful a dig in the ribs with the butt-end of his whip, saying, "Have you got any of that 'cold roast' you told me of in your letter?"

"Why no, Mr. Jorrocks; it's all gone, but there's plenty more in Handley Cross. It's the best place for beef I know; indeed for everything."

"You'll be desperation fond of 'untin' I s'pose," observed Mr. Jorrocks, after a slight pause, flourishing his whip over his head, and giving a knowing look at Doleful's accoutrements.

"It's the only thing worth living for, in my mind," replied Captain Doleful.

"By jingo! so say I," rejoined Mr. Jorrocks; "all time's lost that's not spent in 'untin'.—Give us your hand, Miserrimus, my *bouy*, for you must be a trump—a man after my own 'eart!"



Mr. Jorrock enters onto Handley Cross

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and thereupon Jorrocks gave him such a shaking as nearly sent him off his horse.

"That'll be your kiver 'ack I presume," observed Mr. Jorrocks after their hands were released, as he cast an eye at the white. "He goes up and down like a yard and a 'alf of pump water."

Doleful did not know whether this was meant as a compliment or otherwise, so he "grinned horribly a ghastly smile," and asked Mr. Jorrocks if he was fond of music. "Music!" said Mr. Jorrocks; "yes, the music of the 'ounds—none o' your tamboureenin' work. Give me the real *ough, ough, ough* of a fine deep-toned 'ound in the depths of a rocky dell, as he drags up to old Reynard among the brushwood," and as he spoke, Mr. Jorrocks snuffed the air and threw his head about as though he were feeling for a scent himself—"What sort of fencin' have you?"

"Fencing!" repeated Captain Doleful thoughtfully—"fencing, why we've had none, I think, since the theatre closed."

"*Humph!*" mused Mr. Jorrocks, "that's queer—never knew a play-actor in my life with the slightest turn for 'untin'."

The foremost in the procession having now reached the outskirts of the town, a halt was made to allow the pedestrians to knock the dust off their shoes, and get their voices ready for shouting. Doleful rode along the line exhorting them to order and regularity, and directing the streets through which the procession should pass, taking particular care to keep wide of the Barningtons. A considerable accession was here made to their strength by numerous groups of ladies and gentlemen, who, attracted by the fineness of the day, and a little natural curiosity, had wandered out to see what sort of an animal a Cockney master of hounds was. Miss Prim and Miss Prosey's seminaries, too, turned out in their pink and blue ginghams, and came up just at the period of the halt—all the grooms and helpers of the town who could not get to the station now flocked to swell the throng. The hubbub and confusion was excessive, and they pushed and elbowed, and fought to get near the carriage to have a close view of Mr. Jorrocks. "My eyes, but he's a fat un!" exclaimed Mr. Brisket, the butcher, to his

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foreman. "It would be a downright credit to a butcher to supply such a gent. : can't be less nor three inches o' fat on his rib;" whereupon he thrust a card into Mr. Jorrocks's hand, containing his name, trade, and place of abode. This was a signal for the rest, and immediately a shoal of cards were tendered from persons of all callings and professions. Lucy Sandey would mangle, wash, and clear-starch; then Hannah Pye kept the best potatoes and greengroceries in general; Tom Hardy supplied milk at all hours; George Dodd let donkeys by the day or hour; Samuel Mason offered the card of the Bramber livery stables, where there was a lock-up coach-house; Susan Muddle hoped the ladies would drink with her at the Spa at a shilling a week, and glass found. Then there was a wine-merchant's card, followed by lodging-house keepers' without end, and a chimney-sweep's.

All in advance being now ready, Captain Doleful came grinning and capering through the crowd, and announced to the ladies that they were about to enter the town, and informed Mr. Jorrocks that they would first of all proceed to the Dragon Hotel, from the balcony of which it would have a good effect if he would address the meeting. Without waiting for Mr. Jorrocks's assurance that he "didn't know what to say," he placed himself in advance of Benjamin, and raised his hunting-whip as a signal to the musicians, who immediately struck up "See the conquering hero comes," and the cavalcade proceeded. The boom of the drums, the twang of the horns, and the shouts of the children brought every human being to the doors, windows, and verandahs, and there was such running, and rushing, and fighting to see the conquering hero, and such laughing among the servant-maids at the ample dimensions of his shoulders, with as many observations upon his retinue as would fill a chapter of themselves.

After passing the long line of villas that stud the road in the Mount Sion direction, the cavalcade turned into Arthur Street, where the noise and bustle increased tenfold. Shop-lads, no longer to be restrained, rushed out in defiance of their masters' holloas, some hastily putting up the shutters, others leaving

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the shops to take care of themselves. Bazaars, fancy shops, jewellers', &c., were drawn of both buyers and sellers; and as the "Floreat Scientia" banner rounded the turn into High Street, an advancing mob from the other end of the town charged with such vigour as sent both poles through Stevenson the hatter's window, damaging a dozen pasteboard boxes, being the principal part of his stock-in-trade. Nothing was heard above the clamour but the boom of the drums, and the occasional twang of a horn, while Captain Doleful's red coat, and his horse's bowing white head, seemed borne upon the shoulders of the multitude. Thus they proceeded in stately array down High Street, and neared the Dragon Hotel.

At length they got the carriage up to the arched door, and the party alighted amid a tremendous burst of applause. Captain Doleful having tendered his arm to Mrs. Jorrocks, Belinda took her uncle's, and no sooner did Betsey get out of the back seat of the carriage than a whole host of little dirty boys scrambled in to obtain a better view, making desperate havoc among the Dundee marmalade and Copenhagen cherry-brandy, to the infinite indignation of Benjamin, who roared lustily from the leader that he would "'oss-vip 'em" all round.

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CHAPTER XI.

THE ORATIONS.



NUBBINS, the landlord, having ushered his distinguished guests into the balconied apartment of the first-floor front, Captain Doleful took a hasty review of his person at the looking-glass, placing his straggling hairs in the most conspicuous manner over his forehead, and, loosening his oilskin-covered hat from his scarlet coat, he advanced with out-squared toes and elbows to present himself to the notice of the meeting.

His appearance in the balcony was the signal for a universal roar, amid which the drums and wind instruments did their duty. After bowing and grimacing most condescendingly to the meeting below, silence was at length obtained, and he proceeded to address them as follows:—

“Ladies and gentlemen—*ladies* and gentlemen,” he repeated, laying the emphasis on the word *ladies*, and grinning like an elderly ape on all around, “encouraged by your smiles, by your applause, for, without you, as the poet Campbell beautifully inquires, ‘What is man?—a world without a sun,’ I present myself to your notice to perform an act that I verily and conscientiously believe will prove most conducive to the interest, the happiness, and general welfare of this thriving and important town.” Here the Captain placed his forefinger on his lip, and, according to previous arrangement with the drummers, they rumbled with their drums, and the children gave some loud huzzas, in conjunction with such of the mob as were troubled with a turn for shouting. “Ladies and

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gentlemen," he resumed, "I stand not here for the gratification of the paltry personal vanity of addressing this distinguished assembly, but I present myself to your notice in discharge of the high, the onerous, the honourable and all-important office of Master of the Ceremonies of this renowned Spa, to introduce to your notice the most distinguished, the most determined, the most popular, and the most scientific sportsman England, or any other country, ever saw (loud cheers). Need I say, gentlemen, that this illustrious individual is the great and renowned Mr. Jorrocks—a name familiar to our ears as Mr. Dickens's household words—so familiar that it is even chalked on the walls of our town; and it is indeed a high—a flattering circumstance to my mind, that I—even I—the humble individual who now stands before you, should have been the means of procuring for a town that I love so ardently a man of such unequalled excellence and such distinguished worth."

Here Doleful, being rather blown, put his finger to his lip again, upon which the drums rumbled, the horns twanged, and a round of applause was brewed up. He resumed—"Gentlemen, the temporary cloud that obscured the brightness of our delightful town has passed away! another and a brighter sun has risen, beneath whose fostering rays, prosperity—bright, unequalled prosperity—shall renovate our homes, and draw forth blessings from your grateful hearts (cheers). This, gentlemen, is a thought that repays me for a world of trouble, and believe me that in all the changes and chances of this eventful life, amid all the frowns of life's vicissitudes, the bright recollection of this hour will furnish consolation that a thousand woes will not outweigh (great applause). Let me not, however, ladies and gentlemen, dwell too long on the part I have happily, but unworthily, played in this transaction. Let me not stand between that bright constellation of sporting knowledge and the indulgence of your laudable curiosity. Rather let me withdraw, with a bosom o'erflowing with heartfelt gratitude for the honours your kindness has heaped upon me, and introduce to your notice our great and illustrious stranger." Here Doleful

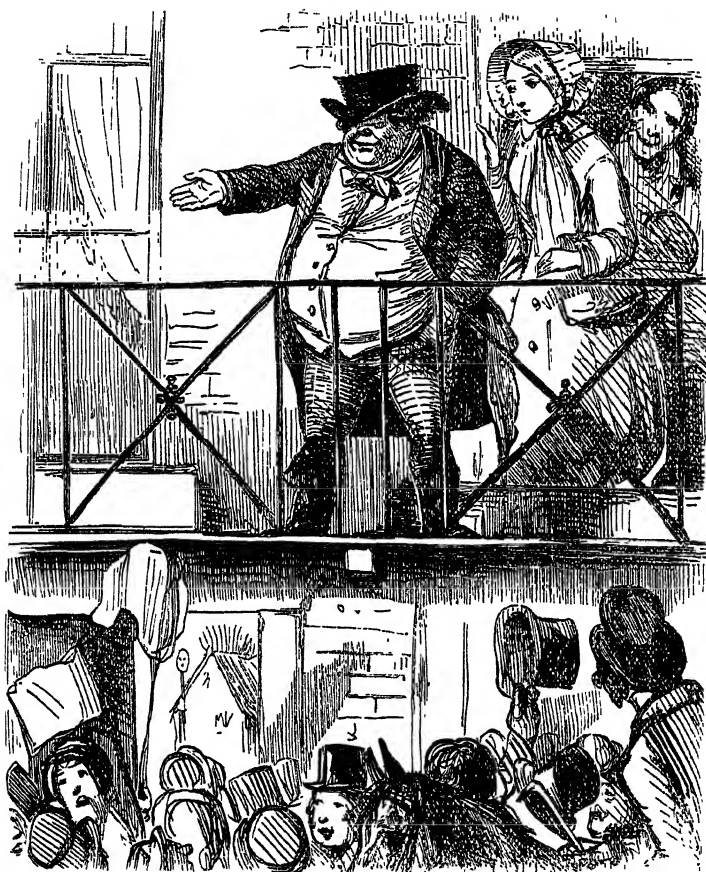
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squared out his elbows and bowed most humbly and condescendingly, first to the front, then to the east and west, and, courtier-like, backed from the balcony into the room, amid loud and long-continued cheers.

While he was delivering himself of all this eloquence, Mrs. Jorrocks was busy inside the room preparing her husband for presentation to the meeting. Having made him take off his versatio coat, she brushed his blue under one over, rubbed the velvet collar right, put his wig straight, and wiped the dust off his Hessian boots with a corner of the table-cover. Doleful came backing in, and nearly upset Jorrocks as he was standing on one leg by the table, undergoing the latter operation. "Now, it's your turn, Mr. Jorrocks," observed the Captain, on the former recovering his equilibrium, and thereupon they joined hands and advanced into the balcony, like the Siamese twins, amid the uproarious applause of the meeting.

"'Ow are ye all?" said Mr. Jorrocks with the greatest familiarity, nodding round to the meeting, and kissing his hand. "'Opes you are well. Now my frind, Miserrimus, having spun you a yarn about who I am, and all that sort of thing, I'll not run his foil, but get upon fresh ground, and say a few words about how matters are to be managed.

"You see I've come down to 'unt your country, to be master of your 'ounds, in fact—and first of all I'll explain to you what *I* means by the word master. Some people call a man a master of 'ounds wot sticks an 'orn in his saddle, and blows when he likes, but leaves everything else to the 'untsman. That's not the sort of master of 'ounds I means to be. Others call a man a master of 'ounds wot puts in the paper Mr. So-and-so's 'ounds meet on Monday, at the Loin o' Lamb; on Wednesday, at the Brisket o' Weal; and on Saturday, at the Frying-pan; and after that, jest goes out or not, as suits his convenience, but *that's* not the sort of master of 'ounds I means to be. Again, some call themselves masters of 'ounds when they pay the difference atwixt the subscription and the cost, leaving the management of matters, the receipt of money, payment of damage, and all them sort of partiklars, to the secretary. But



“'OW ARE YE ALL?”

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that's not the sort of master of 'ounds I means to be. Still, I means to ride with an 'orn in my saddle. Yonder it is, see," said he, pointing to the package behind the carriage, "a regler Percival, silver mouthpiece, deep cup'd—and I means to adwertise the 'ounds in the paper, and not go sneakin' about like some of them beggarly Cockney 'unts, wot look more as if they were goin' to rob a hen-roost than 'unt a fox, but havin' fixed the meets, I shall attend them most punctual and regler, and take off my cap to all *payin'* subscribers as they come up (cheers). This, I thinks, will be the best way of doin' business, for there are some men wot don't care a copper for owin' the master money, so long as the matter rests atwixt themselves, and yet who would not like to see me sittin' among my 'ounds with my cap slouched over my eyes, takin' no more notice of them than if they were as many pigs, as much as to say to all the gemmen round, 'these are the nasty, dirty, seedy screws wot don't pay their subscriptions.'

"In short I means to be an M. F. H. in reality, and not in name. When I sees young chaps careering o'er the country without lookin' at the 'ounds, and in all humane probability not knowin' or carin' a copper where they are, and I cries, '*old 'ard!*' I shall expect to see them pull up and not wait till the next fence *fatches* them too."

Here Mr. Jorrocks made a considerable pause, whereupon the cheering and drumming was renewed, and as it died away, he went on as follows:—

"Of all sitivations under the sun, none is more enviable or more 'onerable than that of a master of fox-'ounds! Talk of a M.P.! vot's an M.P. compared to an M. F. H.? Your M.P. lives in a tainted hatmosphere among other M.P.'s and loses his consequence by the commonness of the office, and the scoldings he gets from those who sent him there, but an M. F. H. holds his levee in the stable, his levee in the kennel, and his levee in the 'untin' field—is great and important everywhere—has no one to compete with him, no one to find fault, but all join in doing honour to him to whom honour is so greatly due (cheers). And oh, John Jorrocks! my good frind,"

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continued the worthy grocer, fumbling the silver in his small clothes with upturned eyes to heaven, "to think that you, after all the hups and downs of life—the crossin's and jostlin's of merchandise and ungovernable trade—the sortin' of sugars—the mexin' of teas—the postin' of ledgers, and handlin' of invoices, to think that you, my dear feller, should have arrived at this distinguished post, is most miraculously wonderful, most singularly queer. Gentlemen, *this* is the proudest moment of my life! (cheers). I've now reached the top rail in the ladder of my ambition! (renewed cheers). Binjimin!" he holloaed out to the boy below, "Binjimin! I say, give an eye to them 'ere harticles behind the chay—the children are all among the Copenhagen brandy and Dundee marmeylad! Vy don't you vollop them? Vere's the use of furnishing you with a whip, I wonder?"

"To resume," said he, after he had seen the back of the carriage cleared of the children, and the marmalade and things put straight. "'Untin', as I have often said, is the sport of kings—the image of war without its guilt, and only five-and-twenty per cent. of its danger. To me the clink of the couples from a vipper-in's saddle is more musical than any notes that ever came out of Greasey's mouth (cheers). I doesn't wish to disparage the value of no man, but this I may say, that no Nabob that ever was foaled loves 'untin' better than me (cheers). It's the merry breath of my body! The liver and bacon of my existence! I doesn't know what the crazyologists may say, but this I believes that my 'ead is nothin' but one great bump of 'untin' (cheers). 'Untin' fills my thoughts by day, and many a good run I have in my sleep. Many a dig in the ribs I gives Mrs. J. when I think they're runnin' into the warmint (renewed cheers). No man is fit to be called a sportsman wot doesn't kick his wife out of bed on a haverage once in three weeks (applause, mingled with roars of laughter). I'm none of your fine, dandified Rotten Row swells, that only ride out to ride 'ome again, but I loves the smell of the mornin' hair, and the merry mud on my tops when I comes home of an evenin' is dear to my 'eart (cheers). Oh, my frinds! if I could but go to

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the kennel now, get out the 'ounds, find my fox, have a good chivey, and *kill* him, for no day is good to me without blood, I'd—I'd—I'd—drink three pints of port after dinner 'stead of two! (loud cheers). That's the way to show Diana your gratitude for favours past, and secure a continuance of her custom in future (cheers). But *that* we will soon do, for if you've—

'Osses sound, and dogs 'ealthy,
Earths well stopped and foxes plenty,'

no longer shall a master be wantin' to lead you to glory (loud cheers). I'll not only show you how to do the trick in the field, but a scientific course o' lectors shall train the young idea in the art at 'ome. I've no doubt we shall all get on capitally—fox-'unters are famous fellows—tell me a man's a fox-hunter, and I loves him at once. We'll soon get 'quainted, and then you'll say that John Jorrocks is the man for your money. At present I've done—hoping werry soon to meet you all in the field—I now says adieu."

Hereupon Mr. Jorrocks bowed, and kissing his hand, backed out of the balcony, leaving his auditory to talk him over at their leisure.

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CHAPTER XII.

CAPTAIN DOLEFUL AGAIN.



Captain Doleful arrives.

WHEN Mr. Jor-
rocks backed
from the bal-
cony into the
“Moon,” after
delivering the
luminous
address re-
ported in our
last chapter,
Captain Dole-
ful looked at
his watch and
found it
wanted but

ten minutes to the time he was to appear at the board of her imperial majesty, Mrs. Barnington ; so ringing for Mr. Snubbins, the landlord, he hastily consigned the party to his protection, and, quitting the room, ran through the town like a lamplighter, to re-arrange his toilette at his lodgings. Off went the old militia coat, the white moleskins and Hessians made way with pantomimic quickness for a black coat and trousers, which, with a shrivelled white waistcoat and a pair of broad-stringed pumps, completed the revised edition of the *arbiter elegantiarum* of Handley Cross Spa. The crowded incidents of the hour left no time for reflection, and fortunate, perhaps, it was for the Captain that

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he had no time to consider of what had taken place, or even his creative genius might have discovered some little difficulty in reconciling the discrepancies that existed between his professions and performances. So quick, however, were his movements, and the transition of events, that John Trot, the under butler, who was one of the audience before the Dragon, had not time to detail the doings of the day to Mr. Mountford, the butler, to tell Mrs. Stumps, the housekeeper, for the information of Bandoline, to carry in broken English to her mistress, ere Captain Doleful's half-resolute tap of a knock announced his arrival at the door.

"Why here's old Wo-begone himself, I do believe!" exclaimed John, breaking off in his narrative at the intrusion of the flag-poles into Stevenson the hatter's window. "It is, indeed," added he, casting his eye up the area-grating at the Captain, as he stood above; "I declare he has peeled off his uniform and come like a Christian. Dirty dog, he can't have washed himself, for I saw him bolt out of the Dragon not three minutes afore I left, and I only looked in at the Phoenix and Flower-pot, and took one glass of hot elder wine, and came straight home;" saying which, John, in the absence of Sam, the footman, settled himself leisurely into his coatee, and proceeded to let the Captain into the house.

"The dog's come to dine," said John on his return, "and precious hungry he is, I daresay, for he don't allow himself above two feeds a week, they say. However, I gave him a bit of consolation by telling him that missis had laid down at four o'clock, with orders not to be disturbed, and therefore it might be eight or nine o'clock before they dined; but 'Sir,' says I, 'there's the *Morning Post*,' so I left him to eat that, and precious savage he looked. Now, I declare on the honour of a gentleman, of all the shabby screws I ever came thwart of in the whole of my professional career, that Doleful is the dirtiest and meanest. T'other night it was raining perfect wash-hand-stand basins full, and after sitting master out to bed, and missis until she began to yawn, he mustered courage to do the expensive, and asked me to fetch him a fly. Well, never had

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I seen the colour of his coin, often and often as he has darkened our door, and come with his nasty jointed clogs, dirty cloaks, and wet numbrellas; but thinks I to myself, this surely will be catching time, and it 'ill all come in a heap in the shape of a golden sovereign pound cake; so out I splashed, silks and all, the first day on, too, and brought up Sam Fletcher's yellow with the grey; skipped upstairs, told him all was ready, handed him his hat, upon which I saw him fumbling in his upper pocket; he stepped into the fly, and just as I closed the door, slipped something into my hand—felt small—half sov., better than nothing, thought I—'thank you, sir; Miss Jelly's,' cried I to Master Sam, off he went, in comes I, looks in my hand—hang me, if it wer'n't a *Joey*!”

“That beats everything!” exclaimed Mr. Mountford, the butler, laying down a handful of spoons he had been counting over; “why, do you know he gave *me* one the very same day, and it lies on the entrance table now, to let him see how little we care for Joeys in our house.”

“Who's that you're talking about?” inquired Mrs. Stumps, whose room, being on the other side of the passage from the butler's pantry, enabled her to hold a dialogue without the trouble of moving herself across, she having been selected on account of her fatness and the volubility of her tongue.

“Only old Lamentable,” replied Mr. Trot. “What do you think the fellow's done now?—complimented Mr. Mountford and myself with a *Joey* apiece. Stop till I catch him with a decent coat on, and see if I don't dribble the soup or melted butter over it.”

“Confound the mean dog,” observed Mrs. Stumps, “he's the most miserable man that ever was seen. I do wonder that missis, with all her fine would-be-fashionable airs, countenances such a mean sneak. Master may be dull, and I daresay he is, but he's a prince compared to old Doleful.”

“Master's *soft*,” replied Mr. Mountford thoughtfully, “and he's *hard* too in some things, but there are many worse men than he. Besides, the wife's enough to drive him mad. *She's a terrible tartar.*”

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"She's in one of her tantrums to-day," observed Mrs. Stumps, "and has had Mademoiselle crying all the morning. She's tried on thirteen dresses already and none will please her. It will be eight o'clock very likely before they dine, and that reminds me she had two notes this morning by post—one was from Lady Gillyfield, and Sam thought he saw something about dining, and staying all night, as he took it upstairs, so just you keep your ears open at dinner, and find out the day, as I want to have a few friends to cards and a quadrille the first time the family go from home."

"Oh, I daresay I can acquaint you all about it without waiting for dinner," observed Mr. Mountford. "Sam, just step into the clothes-room, and feel in B.'s brown frock-coat that he had on this morning, and bring me his letters." Sam obeyed, and speedily returned with three. Mr. Mountford took them, and cast an adhesiv'd one aside, as either a "bill or a begging letter," opened a fine glazed note with blue edges, sealed with a transfix'd heart on green wax:—"Monday at ten, at the Apollo Belvidere," was all it contained, and winking at Sam, who winked at John Trot, who passed the wink to Mrs. Stumps, Mr. Mountford refolded the note, and opened the one from Sir Gideon Gillyfield, which contained a pressing invitation for the Friday following, to make one at a *battu* on the Saturday.

"You must find out whether they go or not," observed Mrs. Stumps; "they will be sure to say something about it at dinner, so mind be on the look-out. There's missis's bell! my stars, how she rings! wouldn't be near her for the world."—A perfect peal.

After Doleful had had a good spell at the *Post*, beginning with the heading and ending with the printer's name at the end, Mr. Barnington made his appearance from his room below, where he had been deceiving himself into the belief that he was reading, and saluted the M.C. in a way that a man generally takes his wife's friends when he does not like her. After exchanging a few nothings, he looked with an air of easy indifference round the room, then at the French clock on the

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mantelpiece, next at his watch to see that it was not wrong, and finally composed himself cross-legged into a low dour with massive cushions at the back and sides. Doleful resumed his seat on the sofa. Thus they sat for half an hour, listening to the ticking of the timepiece, looking alternately at each other and the door. Seven o'clock came and no Mrs. Barnington, then the quarter chimed in that concise sort of way that almost says, "Oh, it's only the quarter!" the half hour followed with a fuller chorus and more substantial music, whereupon Barnington, who was beginning to be hungry, looked indignantly at his watch and the door, then at Doleful, but wisely said nothing. Doleful, who had only treated himself to a penny bun since breakfast, was well-nigh famished, and inwardly wished he had palmed himself off on the Jorrocks's; when just as the timepiece was chiming away at a quarter to eight, a page in a green and gold uniform threw open the door, and in sailed the majestic Mrs. Barnington in lavender-coloured satin. With a slight inclination of her head to the Captain, who was up like an arrow to receive her, and a look of contempt at her husband, she seated herself on an ottoman, and glancing at a diminutive watch in her armlet, and seeing it correspond with the time on the mantelpiece, without a word of apology for keeping them waiting, she hurried off the stage to order dinner *instantly*.

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CHAPTER XIII.

A FAMILY DINNER.



JUST as Mrs. Barnington was desiring Doleful to ring the bell to see why dinner was not ready, Mr. Mountford, with great state, and an air of the most profound respect, walked into the centre of the room, and announced that it was on the table, when, backing out, and leaving the page in charge of the door, he returned to the parlour to twist a napkin round his thumb, and place himself before the centre of the sideboard to be ready to raise the silver cover from the soup tureen, and hand it to John Trot, to pass to Sam to place on the tray the instant the party were seated. Mrs. Barnington, with an air of languid absence, mechanically placed her hand on Doleful's arm, and sailed down the thickly-carpeted staircase, past the footmen in the entrance, and dropped into a many-cushioned chair at the head of the table. Doleful seated himself at the side opposite the fire, and Barnington of course took his place at the foot of the table. Soup and a glass of sherry passed round amid the stares and anxious watchings of the servants, before anything like a conversation was commenced, for Barnington was not a man of many words at any time, and fear of his wife and dislike of Doleful now sealed his lips entirely. Several indifferent topics were tried during the fish, alternately by Mrs. Barnington and Doleful—the weather—the *Morning Post*—the last elopement—somebody's band—the new French milliner—when, gathering up her napkin and giving her head a toss in the air, she observed, in

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a careless, easy sort of way, "By-the-by, Captain Doleful, I forgot to ask you if those Horrocks people arrived to-day?"

"Oh yes, marm, they came," replied the Captain, with uneasiness on his brow, for he saw "Mountford and Co." were all eyes and ears to catch what he said.—"A little malt liquor, if you please. Do you get your malt of Dobbs?" inquired he of Barnington, making a desperate effort to turn the conversation at the outset, the only chance of effecting it; "if you don't," observed he, "there's a capital fellow come from Mortlake in Surrey, to establish an agency here for the sale of the same sort of beer the Queen drinks, and *apropos* of that, Mrs. Barnington, perhaps you are not aware that her Majesty is so truly patriotic as to indulge in the juice of the hop—takes it at luncheon, I understand, in a small silver cup, a present from the Prince, with the lion and the unicorn fighting for the crown beautifully raised in dead gold upon it, made by Hunt and Roskill, who certainly have more taste in trinkets and articles of *vertu* than all the rest of London put together,—but this beer is very good—clear—amber and hoppy," added he, drinking it off, hoping to drown old Jorrocks, wife, niece, and all, in the draught.

"Who is Horrocks, that you were asking about, my dear?" inquired Barnington of his wife, for the purpose of letting Doleful see he didn't consider him worth answering, and not from any motives of curiosity—an infirmity from which he was perfectly free.

"Only some people the Captain and I were talking about this morning, my love, that were expected from London. They are *not* come, you say?" added she, turning to the Captain.

"Oh, yes, marm, I said they *were* come. Allow me the honour of taking wine with you. Do you take champagne? Champagne to your mistress," looking at Mr. Mountford. Mountford helped them accordingly, giving the Captain as little as possible.

"Well, and what sort of people are they?" resumed Mrs. Barnington, setting down her glass, and looking at Doleful as much as to say, "Come, no nonsense; out with it."

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"Upon my word I can hardly give an opinion, for I saw so little of them; but I should say, from what little I did see, that they are very respectable—that's to say (haw, ha, hem), people well-to-do in the world (hem). He seems an uncommonly good-natured old fellow—rattles and talks at a tremendous rate; but really I can hardly fairly give an opinion upon their other qualifications from the very little I saw."

"How many carriages had they?" inquired Mrs. Barnington.

"One, with a pair, but they came by the train; they will probably have more coming by the road."

"Many servants?"

"Not many, I think. Perhaps they are coming by the road, too."

"What are the women like?"

"The old lady seems a monstrous good-natured, round-about, motherly sort of body, neither very genteel nor yet altogether vulgar—a fair average woman, in fact—charitable, flannel-petticoat, soup-kitchen sort of woman,—This is capital mutton—never tasted better. By the way, Mr. Barnington, did you ever eat any Dartmoor mutton? It certainly is the best and sweetest in the world, and this is as like it as anything can possibly be."

"No," was all the answer Mr. Barnington vouchsafed our hero, who, bent on turning the conversation, and nothing disconcerted, immediately addressed himself to his hostess, with, "Beautiful part of the country—fine scenery—should like to live there—people so unaffected and hospitable—ask you to dine and sleep—no puddling your way home through dirty lanes in dark nights. The view from Æther rocks on the edge of Dunmore, most magnificent—there's a fine one also on the road between Exeter and Tiverton—and near Honiton too—what food that country would afford your splendid pencil, Mrs. Barnington. I know no one so competent to do justice to the scenery as yourself," and thereupon the Captain puckered his face into one of his most insinuating grins.

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Mrs. Barnington went on eating her "*role au vent*," inwardly resolving to know all about the Jorrocks's, without compromising one jot of her dignity.

The conversation then took a brisk and rapid range over many topics and to divers places—Bath, Cheltenham, Brighton, Tunbridge Wells, were all visited in succession, but at last Mrs. Barnington fairly landed the Captain back at Handley Cross. "I suppose we shall be having a ball here soon, sharn't we, Captain?" inquired she. "That depends upon Mrs. Barnington," replied the obsequious M.C. in the humblest tone. "If *you* are so disposed there's no doubt of our having one. My ball at present stands first on the list, and that will take place to-morrow fortnight."

"Oh, I forgot your ball entirely—true—oh dear, no! I shouldn't wish for one before that—it might interfere with yours. Of course you will send me five tickets."

The Captain bowed profoundly, for this as much as said there would be a five-pound note coming. "I hope you will have a good one," added she. "There will most probably be some new-comers by that time to amuse one with their strange faces and queer ways.—I wonder if the Horrocks's will go?"

The idea at that moment flashed across the Captain's mind too, and a prophetic thought assuring him they would, he determined to grapple with the subject instead of fighting shy, and ventured boldly to predict they would, and once more essayed to smooth their passage to Mrs. Barnington's patronage.

"Oh, I have no earthly objection to them, I assure you. I *can* have none to people I never either saw or heard of. Of course, if they have letters of introduction I shall call upon them—if not, and you assure me, or rather *convince* me, of their respectability, I shall notice them the same as I do other people who come here as strangers."

"Very much obliged indeed," replied the Captain, feeling all the time that he was "thanking her for nothing."—"They are, I believe, highly respectable. She, I understand, is the

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daughter of a gentleman who was about the court of King George the Third. The young lady is very pretty, and Jorrocks himself really seems a very excellent old fellow."

"What, you are talking about Mr. Jorrocks, are you?" inquired Mr. Barnington, looking up from his "omelette" with an air of sudden enlightenment on his countenance.

"Why, yes, Solomon!" replied his loving spouse; "who did you think we were talking about?"

"Why, you called them Horrocks! How was I to know who you meant?"

"How were *you* to know who we meant? Why, what matter does it make whether *you* know or not? Take the cheese away, Mountford, and don't make this room smell like a beershop."

"Stay! I want some," interposed Mr. Barnington.

"Then take it into your master's room," replied Mrs. Barnington. "Go and stuff yourself there as much as you like; and send for your friend Horrocks, or Jorrocks, or whatever you call him, to keep you company."

And after an evening of this agreeable dog and cat-ing, varied with occasional intercessions for the Jorrocks family, the gallant Captain at length made his adieus and retired to his confectioner's.

We will now see what our newly-arrived friends are about.

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CHAPTER XIV.

MR. JORROCKS AND HIS SECRETARY.



*Mr. Jorrocks thinks he will shoot
Doleful.*

"SEND my Sec. here," said Mr. Jorrocks, with great dignity, to Snubbins, the landlord of the Dragon, who, in compliance with Doleful's directions, was waiting to receive his orders. "Send my Sec. here," he repeated, seeing the man did not catch what he said.

"Your Sec., sir," repeated the landlord; "it'll be your boy, I presume?" turning to the waiter, and desiring him to send the ostler to stand by the horses' heads while Mr. Jorrocks's boy came upstairs.

"No, not my *boy*," replied Mr. Jorrocks with a frown, "so you *presumes* wrong."

"Your maid, then?" inquired the sharp waiter, thinking to hit what his master had missed.

"No, nor my maid neither," was the worthy grocer's answer,—"what I want is *my* Sec., the Secretary to *my* 'unt, in fact."

"Oh! the Secretary to the hunt; that will be Mr. Fleeceall," rejoined the landlord with a grin of satisfaction.—"Run up to Lavender Lane, and tell Mr. Fleeceall that Mr. Jorrocks has arrived, and wishes to see him."

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"Tell him to come *directly*," said Mr. Jorrocks, adding, in a mutter, "I doesn't understand why he's not here to receive me. Fetch me up a glass of cold sherry negus *with*.—Public speakin' makes one werry dry."

Before the *with* was well dissolved, so as to enable our hero to quench his thirst at a draught, our one-eyed friend entered the room, hat in hand, and presented himself to Mr. Jorrocks.

"Now I wants to see you about my 'ounds," said Mr. Jorrocks, with an air of authority.—"Where are they?"

"Some, I believe, are in the kennel; others are in the Vale with the various farmers," replied Mr. Fleeceall.

"Some in the Wale!" repeated Mr. Jorrocks with surprise, "vy arn't they all in kennel? You surely knew I was a comin', and ought not to have had things in this hugger-mugger state.—Whose fault is it? Where's the kennel-book?"

"The kennel-book?" repeated Mr. Fleeceall with surprise.

"Yes, the kennel-book, you know what that is surely—the list of the 'ounds in fact."

"Oh, I beg your pardon—I don't think there is any regular kennel-book—at least I never had one—all that *I* do is to receive the subscriptions, write to gentlemen that are in arrear, or are likely to subscribe, tax poultry bills, and prevent extortion in general."

"Well, all werry useful in its way," replied Mr. Jorrocks, "but a secretary to an 'unt is expected to know all about the 'ounds too, and everything besides—at least he's no Sec. for *me* if he don't," added he, his eyes sparkling with animation as he spoke.

"Oh, I do," replied Mr. Fleeceall with trepidation, "only Captain Doleful has had all our people so busy, preparing for your reception, that we really have not been able at so short a notice to make our arrangements so perfect as we could wish. I know all the hounds *well*."

"Then put on your 'at and come with me to the kennel. It's full moon to-night, so we needn't mind about time."

Fleeceall hesitated, but seeing Mr. Jorrocks was resolute, he put a good face on the matter, and boldly led the way. As he



"SEND MY SEC. HERE."

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piloted Mr. Jorrocks through sundry short cuts, he contrived to insinuate, in a casual sort of way, that things would not be in such apple-pie order as he might expect, but that a day or two would put everything right. Calling at Mat Maltby's for the key of the kennel, he enlisted young Mat into the service, desiring him to stand by and prompt him what to say; he very soon had the new master before the rails of the kennel. The hounds raised a melodious cry as they jumped against the paling, or placed themselves before the door, and anger flew from Mr. Jorrocks's mind at the cheerful sound. "*Get back, hounds! get back! Bonney-bell, have a care!*" cried Mat, as they pushed against the door, and prevented its opening. "Perhaps you'll take a switch, sir," said he, turning to Mr. Jorrocks, and handing a hazel-rod from a line hanging on the rails beside the door. "*Get back, hounds!*" again he cried, and inserting his right hand with a heavy double-thonged whip through an aperture between the door and the post, he loosened the thong, and sweeping it round among their legs, very soon cleared a space so as to enable the master to enter. Mr. Jorrocks then strutted in.

The kennel was quite of the primitive order, but dry and airy withal. It consisted of two rooms, while the feeding-troughs in the half-flagged yard showed that the hounds dined out of doors. A temporary boiling-house was placed behind, and the whole of the back part adjoined close upon the New Ebenezer Chapel.

Great was Mr. Jorrocks's surprise and indignation at finding that the pack was without a huntsman, whipper-in, or horses.

He was perfectly thunderstruck, and it was some time ere his rage suffered his tongue to give vent to his thoughts.

It was a "*reg'lar do,*" and he'd "*wesh his 'ands of the concern at once.*" He'd "*shoot Doleful first though—skin him alive in fact.*"

Fleeceall attempted to soothe him, but finding he was only adding fuel to the fire, he suffered his anger to exhaust itself on the unfortunate and now luckily absent Captain. Mr. Jorrocks was very wroth, but considering how far he had

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gone, and how he would be laughed at if he backed out, he determined to let it be "over shoes, over boots," so he stuck out his legs and proceeded to examine the hounds.

"Plenty of bone," observed he, with a growl.

"Oh, lots of bones!" replied Fleeceall; "that corner's full," pointing to the bone-house.

"Are they steady?" inquired Mr. Jorrock's.

"Middling," replied Fleeceall, anxious to be safe.

"Vot, they're not riotous, are they? Never 'unted bagmen or nothin' of that sort?" inquired our master.

"Oh dear no," replied Fleeceall; "ran a boy, I believe, one day."

"Ran a boy!" exclaimed Mr. Jorrock's, "never heard of such a thing! He must have had a drag."

"They bit his drag," replied Fleeceall, laughing.

"It were a young hound bit an old 'ooman," interposed Mat, anxious for the credit of the pack. "He had a bone, and she would have it from him, and the boy got atween the two."

"*Humph!*" grunted Mr. Jorrock's, not altogether relishing the story, whichever way it was. The hounds were a fine lashing-looking lot, chiefly dogs, with a strong family likeness running through the pack. There were few old ones, and the lot were fairly average. Worse packs are to be found in great kennels. Mr. Jorrock's remained with them until he had about mastered their names, and there appearing no help for the matter, he resolved to do the best he could with his boy until he could meet with a huntsman.—Ordering the feeder to be there by daybreak, and have the hounds ready for him to take out to exercise, he thrust his arm through Fleeceall's, and desired him to conduct him back to the Dragon.

As they went he lectured him well on the duties of his office. "Now, you see, sir," said he, "I doesn't want one of your fine auditin' sort of Secs., what will merely run his eye over the bills, and write his initials on the back, right or wrong, as many do, but I wants a real out-and-out working chap, that will go into them hitem by hitem, and look sharp arter the

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pence, without leavin' the pounds to take care of themselves. A good Sec. is a werry useful sort of hanimal, but a bad un's only worth 'anging. In the first place you must be werry particklar about gettin' in the subscriptions. That is always uppermost in a good Sec.'s mind, and he should never stir out of doors without a list in his pocket, and should appear at the coverside with a handful of receipts by way of a hint to wot hav'n't paid. Now, you must get an account book with ruled columns for pounds, shillings, and pence, and open a Dr. and Cr. account with every man Jack on 'em. You can't do better nor follow the example o' the Leamington lads, who string up all the tradespeople with the amount of their subscriptions in the shops and public places. It's clearly the duty of every man to subscribe to a pack of 'ounds—even if he has to borrow the money. 'No tick,' mind, must be the order of the day, and every Saturday night you must come to me with your book, and I shall allow you two glasses of spirit and water whilst we overhaul the accounts. You must be all alive, in fact. Not an 'oss must die in the district without your knowin' of it—you must have the nose of a vultur, with the knowledge of a knacker. Should you make an 'appy 'it (hit) and get one with some go in him, I'll let you use him yourself until we wants him for the boiler. In the field a good Sec. ought always to be ready to leap first over any awkward place, or catch the M. F. H.'s 'oss if he 'appens to lead over. In all things he must consider the M. F. H. first, and never let self stand in the way. Then you'll be a good Sec., and when I doesn't want a Sec. no longer, why you'll always be able to get a good Sec.'s place from the character I shall give you.

"Now, here we are at the Dragon again.—Come upstairs and I'll make you acquainted with your missis," saying which, Mr. Jorrocks led the way, and was met on the landing by the knock-knee'd, greasy-collared waiter, who ushered them into the room, where Mrs. Jorrocks and Belinda, fatigued with the doings of the day, had laid themselves down on a couple of sofas, waiting for the return of Mr. Jorrocks to have their tea.

"This be my Sec.," said Mr. Jorrocks to his spouse, with the

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air of a man introducing a party for whom there is no occasion to put oneself out of the way. Mrs. Jorrocks, who had bolted up at the opening of the door, gave a sort of half bow, and rubbing her eyes and yawning, very quietly settled herself again on the sofa. Tea passed away, when, the ladies having retired, Mr. Jorrocks and Fleeceall very soon found out that they had a taste in common, viz.—a love of brandy and water, wherewith they sat diluting themselves until the little hours of the morning, in the course of which carouse Fleeceall dexterously managed to possess himself of every particle of his worthy patron's history and affairs—how much he had in the funds, how much in Exchequer bills, how much in railways, and how much in the Globe Insurance Office.

A page or two from Mr. Jorrocks's Journal, which he has kindly placed at our disposal, will perhaps best elucidate the doings of the early days of his reign over the Handley Cross fox-hounds.

"*Saturday*.—Awoke with desperation 'ead ach—Dragon brandy car'nt be good—Dreamed the Lily-vite-sand train had run off with me, and chucked me into the channel—Called to Binjimin—the boy snorin' sound asleep!—only think, snorin' *sound asleep*, the werry mornin' after comin' down to whip into a pack of fox-'ounds—fear he has no turn for the chase. Pulled his ears, and axed him what he was snorin' for. Swore he wasn't snorin'!—Never heard a boy of his size tell such a lie in my life. Rigged for 'unting, only putting on my hat 'stead of my cap,—and on 'orseback by daylight—Xerxes full of fun—Arterxerxes dullish—Bin. rode the latter, in his new tops and spurs—'Now,' said I to Bin. as we rode to the kennel, 'you are hentering upon a most momentous crisis—If you apply yourself diligently and assiduously to your callin', and learn to be useful in kennel, and to cheer the 'ounds with a full melodious voice—such a voice, in fact, as the tall lobster-merchant with the green plush breeches and big calves, that comes along our street of a still evenin', with his basket on his 'ead, cryin' "*LOB-sters! fine LOB-sters!*" has, there is no sayin' but in course of time you may arrive at the distinguished 'onour of readin' an account of

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your doin's in *Bell's Life* or the *Field*; but if you persist in playin' at marbles, chuck farthin', and flyin' kites, 'stead of attendin' in the stable, I'll send you back to the charity school from whence you came, where you'll be rubbed down twice a day with an oak towel, and kept on chick-weed and grunsell like a canary bird,—mark my words if I von't.'

"Found Mat Maltby at the kennel weshin' the flags with a new broom, and 'issing for 'ard life—werry curious it is, wet or dry, soft or 'ard, these chaps always 'iss. 'Ounds all delighted to see me—stood up in my stirrups looking over the rails, 'olloain', cheerin', and talkin' to them. Yoicks Dexterous! Yoicks Luckey-lass! Yoicks Rallywood! Good dog. Threw bits of biscuit as near each of them as I could pitch them, callin' the 'ounds by name, to let them see that I knew them—Some caught it in their mouths like Hindian jugglers—'Let 'em out, Mat,' at last cried I, when back went the bolt, open went the door, and out they rushed full cry, like a pent up 'urricane, tearin' down Hexworthy Street into Jireth Place, through Mornington Crescent, by the Bramber Promenade into the High Street, and down it with a crash and melody of sweet music that roused all the old water-drinkin' maids from their pillows, galvanised the watchmen, astonished the gas-light man, who was making way for daylight, and reg'larly rousing the whole inhabitants of the place.

"Clapt spurs to Xerxes and arter them, halloain' and crackin' my whip, but deuce a bit did they 'eed me—On they went! sterns up and 'eads too, towlin', and howlin', and chirpin', as though they had a fox afore them. Butchers' dogs, curs, setters, mastiffs, mongrels of all sorts and sizes, flew out as they went, some joinin' cry, others worryin' and fightin' their way, but still the body of the pack kept movin' onward at a splittin' pace, down the London-road, as wild as hawks, without turning to the right or the left, until they all flew, like a flock of pigeons, clean out of sight. 'Oh, dear! oh, dear!' cried I, pullin' up, fairly exhausted, at the third milestone, by the cross-roads from Cadger's House and Knowlton, 'I've lost my 'ounds, and I'm ruined for ever.' 'Blow your 'orn!' cried a countryman



THE HOUNDS AND THE IMAGE MERCHANT.

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who was sittin' on the stone, 'they are not far afore you, and the dogs not far afore them:' but blow me tight, I was so blown myself, that I couldn't raise a puff—easier to blow one's 'orse than one's 'orn. To add to my grief and infinite mortification, Binjimin came poundin' and clatterin' along the hard road, holloain' out as he went, 'Buy LOB-ster-r! fine LOB-ster-r-r!'

"The pack had turned down Greenford Lane, and I jogged after them, sorely puzzled, and desperate perplexed. On I went for a mile or more, when the easterly breeze bore the 'ounds' cry on its wings, and pushin' forward, I came to a corner of the road, where the beauties had thrown up short before an Italian plaster of Paris poll-parrot merchant, who, tray on head, had the whole pack at bay around him, bellowin' and howlin' as though they would eat him. 'Get round them, Binjimin,' cried I, 'and flog them away to me,' and takin' out my 'orn, I blew for 'ard life, and what with view holloas, and cheerin', and coaxin', with Bin. at their sterns, succeeded in gettin' most of them back to their kennel. Plaster of Paris poll-parrot merchant followed all the way, indulgin' in frightful faces and an unknown tongue."

The Journal then branches off into a mem. of what he did at breakfast in the eating line, how he paid his bill at the Dragon, after disputing the brandy items, adding that though attendance was charged in the bill, the servants all evinced a disposition to shake hands with him at parting, which he thought was making matters worse instead of better. He also recorded how he moved to Diana Lodge, which he did not find quite so commodious as he expected. The day's entry closes with a mem. that he had stewed beefsteaks for dinner.

"*Sunday*.—Up by cock-crow, and into the kennel. Dexterous and Mercury been fightin' about a bone, and Mercury got a bloody ear. Lector'd Bin. and Mat upon the unpropriety of leavin' bones about. Made Bin. call over the 'ounds by name, double-thongin' him when he made a mistake.

"Mrs. Jorrocks in a desperation fidget to get to church. Never know'd her so keen afore. Secret out—got a new

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gown, and a bonnet like a market gardener's flower basket. With all her keenness contrived to start just as the bells gave over ringin'—Beadle, in blue and gold, with a cocked 'at on his head, and a white wand in his hand, received us at the door, and handed us over to the sexton, in deep blue, bound with black velvet, who paraded us up the 'isle, and placed us with much clatterin' in the seat of honour just afore the pulpit. Church desperate full, and every eye turned on the M. F. H.—Mrs. J. thought they were lookin' at her! poor deluded body. Belinda, dressed in lavender, and lookin' werry wholesome. Lessons long—sermon excellent—all about 'onerin' one's superiors, meaning the M. F. H. doubtless.

“After church, friend Miserrimus came and shook 'ands with us all round. Gave him 'unbounded pleasure' to see us all so bloomin' and well. Mrs. J. delighted, and axed him to dine. Five, and no waitin'. Walked down High Street. Mrs. Jorrocks on one arm, Belinda on t'other. Doleful in the gutter. Fine thing to be a great man. Everybody stared—many took off their 'ats.—Country people got off the flags. 'That's Mr. Jorrocks,' said one, 'Which?' cried another. 'Do show him to me,' begged a third. 'Jorrocks for ever!' cried the children. Nothing like being a great man. Kennel at two—feedin'-time—plaster of Paris poll-parrot merchant outside, still in a great rage, but didn't catch what he said. Many people came and wondered how I knew the names of the 'ounds—all so much alike, they said, Take them a lifetime to know them. Miserable ignoramusses.

“*Monday.*—At the kennel by daylight. Binjimin, as usual, to be kicked awake. The bouy seems to take no interest in the thing. Fear all the lickin' in the world von't drive a passion for the chase into him. Threatened to cut his coat into ribbons on his back, if he didn't look lively. Mat Maltby recommended the 'ounds to be coupled this time—condescended to take his advice. Told Bin. not to cry 'boil'd LOB-sters' as he did on Saturday, but to sing out in a cheerful voice, rich and melodious, *like* the boiled-lobster merchant. Axed what to sing out? 'Why, "get on 'ounds," ven 'ounds'ang (hang) back,

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and "gently there!" when they gets too far forward,' said I. Put Xerxes's head towards kennel door this time, instead of from it. Worth a golden sovereign of any man's money to see 'ounds turn out of kennel. Sich a cry! sich music! old Dexterous jumped up at Xerxes, and the hanimal all but kicked me over his 'ead. Pack gathered round me, some jumpin' up against the 'oss's side, others standin' bayin', and some lookin' anxiously in my face, as much as to say, which way this time, Mr. Jorrocks? Took them a good long strong trot to the pike, near Smarden, and round by Billingbrook, letting them see the deer in Chidfold Park. Quite steady—make no doubt they will be a werry superior pack in less than no time—make them as handey as ladies' maids,—do every-thing but pay their own pikes in fact. Wonder Doleful don't ride out. Keen sportsman like him, one would think would like to see the 'ounds."

The Journal proceeds in this strain for two or three days more, Mr. Jorrocks becoming better satisfied with his pack each time he had them out. On the Friday, he determined on having a bye-day on the following one, for which purpose he ordered his secretary to be in attendance, to show him a likely find in the country where he would not disturb many covers. Of course the meet was to be kept strictly private, and of course, like all "strict secrets," Fleeceall took care to tell it to half the place. Still, as it was a "peep-of-day affair," publicity did not make much matter, inasmuch as few of the Handley Cross gentry loved hunting better than their beds.

Fleeceall's situation was rather one of difficulty, for he had never been out hunting but once, and that once was in a gig, as related in a preceding chapter; but knowing, as Dr. Johnson said, that there are "two sorts of information, one that a man carries in his head, and the other that he knows where to get;" nothing daunted by the mandate, he repaired to Mat Maltby the elder, a cunning old poacher, who knew every cover in the county, upon whose recommendation it was arranged that a bag-fox, then in the possession of a neighbour, should be shook in South Grove, a long slip of old oak, with an excellent bottom



MR. JORROCKS CALLING BENJAMIN.

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for holding a fox. All things being thus arranged, as Mr. Jorrocks conceived, with the greatest secrecy, he went to bed early, and long before it was light, he lay tumbling and tossing about, listening to the ticking of the clock below, and the snoring of Benjamin above.

At last day began to dawn, and having sought Ben's room and soused the boy with a pitcher of cold water, Mr. Jorrocks proceeded to jump into his hunting clothes, consisting of a roomy scarlet coat, with opossum pockets and spoon cuffs, drab shags, and mahogany-coloured tops. Arrived at the kennel, he found Fleeceall there, on his old gig mare, with his hands stuck in the pockets of a dirty old mackintosh, which completely enveloped his person. "Is Miserrimus 'ere?" inquired Mr. Jorrocks, all fuss and flurry on discovering the person of his Secretary. "Well, carn't wait—sorry for it—know better another time; and thereupon he ordered out the horses, gave Ben a leg up on to Xerxes, mounted Arterxerxes himself, the hounds were unkennelled with a melodious rush, and desiring Fleeceall to lead the way, Mr. Jorrocks got the glad pack about him, and went away for South Grove, with a broad grin of satisfaction on his jolly face.

The day seemed auspicious, and there was a balmy freshness in the air that promised well for scent. Added to this, Mr. Jorrocks had cut the left side of his chin in shaving, which he always considered ominous of sport.—Bump, bump, jolt, jolt, jog, jog, he went on his lumbering hunter, now craning over its neck to try if he could see its knees, now cheering and throwing bits of biscuit to the hounds, now looking back to see if Benjamin was in his right place, and again holloaing out some witticism to Fleeceall in advance. Thus they reached the rushy, unenclosed common, partially studded with patches of straggling gorse, which bounds the east side of South Grove, and our sporting master having wet his forefinger on his tongue, and held it up to ascertain which quarter the little air there was came from, so as to give the pack the benefit of the wind, prepared for the start off without delay. Having scrutinised the wood fence most attentively, he brought his horse

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to bear upon the rotten stakes and witherings of a low, ill-made-up gap. In the distance Jorrocks thought of jumping it, but he changed his mind as he got nearer. "Pull out this stake, Binjimin," exclaimed he to the boy, suddenly reining up short: "Jamp a top on't! jamp a top on't!" added he, "so as to level the 'edge with the ground," observing, "these little places often give one werry nasty falls." This feat being accomplished, Benjamin climbed on to Xerxes again, and Jorrocks desiring him to keep on the right of the cover, parallel with him, and not to be sparing of his voice, rode into the wood after his hounds, who had broken away with a whimper, ripening into a challenge, the moment he turned his horse's head towards the cover.

What a cry there was! The boy with the fox in a bag had crossed the main ride about a minute before the hounds entered, and they took up the scent in an instant—Mr. Jorrocks thought it was the morning drag, and screamed and halloed most cheerily—"Talli-ho!" was heard almost instantaneously at the far end of the wood, and taking out his horn, Mr. Jorrocks scrambled through the underwood, breaking the briars and snapping the hazels as he went. Sure enough the fox had gone that way, but the hounds were running flash in a contrary direction. "Talli-ho! talli-ho! hoop! hoop! hoop! away! away! away!" holloed Mat Maltby, who, after shaking the fox most scientifically, had pocketed the sack.

Twang, twang, twang, went Mr. Jorrocks's horn, sometimes in full, sometimes in divided notes and half screeches. The hounds turned and made for the point. Governor, Adamant, Dexterous, and Judgment came first, then the body of the pack, followed by Benjamin at full gallop on Xerxes, with his face and hands all scratched and bleeding from the briars and brushwood that Xerxes, bit in teeth, had borne him triumphantly through. *Bang*, the horse shot past Mr. Jorrocks, Benjamin screaming, yelling, and holding on by the mane, Xerxes doing with him just what he liked, and the hounds getting together and settling to the scent. "My vig, wot a spli—" cried Mr. Jorrocks in astonishment, as Xerxes took a high stone wall out of the cover in his stride, without disturbing the coping, but bringing Ben

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right on to his shoulder—"Hoff, for a fi' pun note! hoff for a guinea 'at to a Gossamer!" exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks, eyeing his whipper-in's efforts to regain the saddle. A friendly chuck of Xerxes's head assists his endeavours, and Ben scrambles back to his place. A gate on the left let Mr. Jorrocks out of cover, on to a good sound sward, which he prepared to take advantage of by getting Arterxerxes short by the head, rising in his stirrups, and hustling him along as hard as ever he could lay legs to the ground. An open gate at the top fed the flame of his eagerness, and, not being afraid of the pace so long as there was no leaping, Jorrocks sent him spluttering through a swede turnip field as if it was pasture. Now sitting plum in his saddle, he gathered his great whip together, and proceeded to rib-roast Arterxerxes in the most summary manner, calling him a great, lurching, rolling, lumbering beggar, vowing that if he didn't lay himself out and go as he ought, he'd "boil him when he got 'ome." So he jerked and jagged, and kicked and spurred, and hit and held, making indifferent progress compared to his exertions. The exciting cry of hounds sounded in front, and now passing on to a very heavy, roughly ploughed upland, our master saw the hindquarters of some half-dozen horses, the riders of which had been in the secret, disappearing through the high quick fence at the top.

"Dash my vig, here's an unavoidable leap, I do believe," said he to himself, as he neared the headland, and saw no way out of the field but over the fence—a boundary one; "and a werry hawkward place it is too," added he, eyeing it intently, "a yawnin' blind ditch, a hugly quick fence on the top, and may be a plough or 'arrow, turned teeth huppermost, on the far side.

"Oh, John Jorrocks, John Jorrocks, my good frind, I wishes you were well over with all my 'eart—terrible place, indeed! Give a guinea 'at to be on the far side." So saying, he dismounted, and pulling the snaffle-rein of the bridle over his horse's head, he kneeled the lash of his ponderous whip to it, and very quietly slid down the ditch and climbed up the fence, "*who-a-ing*" and crying to his horse to "stand still," expecting



Mr. Gervais (dog) - "Come pup! I say - You, say, Bristle!"

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every minute to have him atop of him. The taking-on place was wide, and two horses having gone over before, had done a little towards clearing the way, so having gained his equilibrium on the top, Mr Jorrocks began jerking and coaxing Arterxerxes to induce him to follow, pulling at him much in the style of a schoolboy who catches a log of wood in fishing.

"Come hup! my man," cried Mr. Jorrocks coaxingly, jerking the rein; but Arterxerxes only stuck his great resolute forelegs in advance and pulled the other way. "*Gently*, old fellow!" cried he, "gently, Arterxerxes my bouy!" dropping his hand, so as to give him a little more line, and then trying what effect a jerk would have in inducing him to do what he wanted. Still the horse stood with his great legs before him. He appeared to have no notion of leaping. Jorrocks began to wax angry. "Dash my vig, you hugly brute!" he exclaimed, grinning with rage at the thoughts of the run he was losing; "dash my vig, if you don't mind what you're arter, I'll get on your back, and bury my spurs in your sides. COME HUP! I say, YOU HUGLY BEAST!" roared he, giving a tremendous jerk of the rein, upon which the horse flew back, pulling Jorrocks downwards in the muddy ditch. Arterxerxes then threw up his heels and ran away, whip and all.

Meanwhile, our bagman played his part gallantly, running three-quarters of a ring, of three-quarters of a mile, chiefly in view, when, feeling exhausted, he threw himself into a furze-patch, near a farmyard, where Dauntless very soon had him by the back, but the smell of the aniseed, with which he had been plentifully rubbed, disgusting the hound, he chucked him in the air and let him fall back in the bush. Xerxes, who had borne Ben gallantly before the body of the pack, came tearing along like a poodle with a monkey on his back, when losing the cry of hounds, the horse suddenly stopped short, and off flew Benjamin beside the fox, who, all wild with fear and rage, seized Ben by the nose, who ran about with the fox hanging to him, yelling, "Murder! murder! murder!" for hard life.

And to crown the day's disasters, when at length our fat friend got his horse and his hounds, and his damaged Benjamin

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scraped together again, and re-entered Handley Cross, he was yelled at, and hooted, and rid coat! rid coat!—ed by the children, and made an object of unmerited ridicule by the fair but rather unfeeling portion of the populace.

“Lauk! here’s an old chap been to Spilsby!” shouted Betty Lucas, the mangle-woman, on getting a view of his great mud-stained back.

“*Hoot!* he’s always tumblin’ off, that ard chap,” responded Mrs. Hardbake, the itinerant lollypop seller, who was now waddling along with her tray before her.

“Sich old fellers have no business out a-huntin’!” observed Mrs. Rampling, the dressmaker, as she stood staring bonnet-box on arm.

Then a marble-playing group of boys suspended operations to give Jorrocks three cheers; one, more forward than the rest, exclaiming, as he eyed Arterxerxes, “A! what a shabby tail! A! what a shabby tail!”

Next, as he passed the Barley-mow beer-shop, Mrs. Gallon, the landlady, who was nursing a child at the door, exclaimed across the street, to Blash the barber’s pretty but rather wordy wife—

“*A—a—a!* ar say Fanny!—old fatty’s had a fall!”

To which Mrs. Blash replied with a scornful toss of her head, at our now admiring friend—

“*Hut!* he’s always on his back, that old feller.”

“Not ’alf so often as you are, old gal!” retorted the now indignant Mr. Jorrocks, spurring on out of hearing.

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CHAPTER XV.

THE COCKNEY WHIPPER-IN.



“W HEN will your hounds be going out again think ye, Mr. Benjamin?” inquired Samuel Strong, a country servant of all work, lately arrived at Handley Cross, as they sat round the saddle-room fire of the Dragon Inn yard, in company with the persons hereafter enumerated, the day after the run described in the last chapter.

Samuel Strong was just the sort of man that would be Samuel Strong. Were his master to ring his bell, and desire the waiter to tell the “Boots” to send his servant “Samuel Strong” to him, Boots would pick Sam out of a score of servants, without ever having seen him before. He was quite the southern-hound breed of domestics. Large-headed, almost lop-eared, red-haired (long, coarse, and uneven), fiery whiskers, making a complete fringe round his harvest moon of a face, with a short thick nose that looked as though it had been sat upon by a heavy person. In stature he was of the middle height, square-built, and terribly clumsy.

Nor were the defects of nature at all counterbalanced by the advantages of dress, for Strong was clad in a rural suit of livery, consisting of a footman’s morning jacket of dark grey cloth, with a stand-up collar, plentifully besprinkled with large brass buttons, with raised edges, as though his master were expecting his crest from the herald’s college. Moreover, the jacket, either from an original defect in its construction, or from that propensity to shrink which inferior clothes unfortunately have,

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had so contracted its dimensions that the waist buttons were half-way up Samuel's back, and the lower ones were just where the top ones ought to be. The shrinking of the sleeves placed a pair of large serviceable-looking hands in nervously striking relief. The waistcoat, broad blue and white stripe, made up stripe lengthways, was new, and probably the tailor, bemoaning the scanty appearance of Sam's nether man, had determined to make some atonement to his front, for the waistcoat extended full four inches below his coat, and concealed the upper part of a very baggy pair of blue plush shorts, that were met again by very tight drab gaiters, that evidently required no little ingenuity to coax together to button. A six-shilling hat, with a narrow silver band, and binding of the same metal, and a pair of darned white Berlin gloves, completed the costume of this figure servant.

Benjamin Brady—or "Binjimin"—was the very converse of Samuel Strong. A little puny, pale-faced, gin-drinking-looking Cockney, with a pair of roving pig-eyes, peering from below his lank white hair, cut evenly round his head, as though it had been done by the edges of a barber's basin. Benjamin had increased considerably in his own opinion by the acquisition of a pair of top-boots, and his appointment of whipper-in to the hounds, in which he was a good deal supported by the deference usually paid by country servants to London ones.

Like all inn saddle-rooms, the Dragon one was somewhat contracted in its dimensions, and what little there was was rendered less by sundry sets of harness hanging against the walls, and divers saddle-stands, boot-trees, knife-cleaners, broken pitchforks, and bottles with candles in their necks, scattered promiscuously around. Nevertheless, there was a fire to keep "hot water ready," and above the fireplace were sundry smoke-dried hand-bills of country horses for the bygone season—"Jumper," "Clever Clumsy," "Barney Bodkin," "Billy Button," &c.—while logs of wood, three-legged stools, and inverted horse-pails served the place of chairs around.

On the boiler side of the fire, away from the door—for no one has a greater regard for No. 1 than himself—sat the



BENJAMIN IN THE SADDLE-ROOM.

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renowned Benjamin Brady, in a groom's drab frock-coat, reaching down to his heels, a sky-blue waistcoat, patent cord breeches, with grey worsted stockings, and slippers, airing a pair of very small mud-stained top-boots before the fire, occasionally feeling the scratches on his face, and the bites the fox inflicted on his nose the previous day; next him sat the "first pair boy out," a grey-headed old man of sixty, whose jacket, breeches, boots, entire person, in fact, were concealed by a long brown holland thing, that gave him the appearance of sitting booted and spurred in his nightshirt. Then came the ostler's lad, a boy of some eight or nine years old, rolling about on the flags, playing with the saddle-room cat; and, immediately before the fire, on a large inverted horse-pail, sat Samuel Strong, while the circle was made out by Bill Brown, "Tom," a return postboy, and a lad who assisted Bill Brown, the one-eyed helper of Dick the ostler—when Dick himself was acting the part of assistant waiter in the Dragon, as was the case on this occasion.

"When will your hounds be going out again, think ye, Mr. Benjamin?" was the question put by Samuel Strong to our sporting Leviathan.

"Ang me if I knows," replied the boy, with the utmost importance turning his top-boots before the fire. "It's precious little consequence, I thinks, when we gets out again, if that gallows old governor of ours persists in 'unting the 'ounds himself. I've *all* the work to do! Bless ye, we should have lost 'ounds, fox and all yesterday, if I hadn't rid like the werry wengeance. See 'ow I've scratched my mug," added he, turning up a very pasty and much scratched countenance. "If I'm to 'unt the 'ounds, and risk my neck at every stride, I must have the wages of a huntsman, or blow me tight, as the old 'un says, he may suit himself."

"What'n a chap is your old gen'leman?" inquired the "first pair boy out," who, having been in service himself, where he might have remained if he could have kept sober, had still a curiosity to know how the world of servitude went on.

"Oh, hang'd if I knows," replied Benjamin, "precious rum

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'un I assure you. Whiles, he's well enough, then it's Bin this, and Bin that, and Bin you'll be a werry great man, Bin, and suchlike gammon; and then the next minute, p'r'aps, he's in a reg'lar sky-blue, swearin' he'll cut my liver and lights out, or bind me apprentice to a fiddler—but then I knows the old fool, and he knows he carn't do without me, so we just battle on the best way we can together," added Ben with a knowing toss of his head.

"You'll have good wage, I 'spose," rejoined Samuel, with a sigh, for his "governor" only gave him ten pounds a year, and no perquisites, or "stealings," as the Americans honestly call them.

"Precious little of that I assure you," replied Benjamin—"at least the old warment never pays me. He swears he pays it to our old 'oman; but I believe he pockets it himself, an old ram; but I'll have a reckoning with him some of these odd days, or I'll be off to the diggin's. "What'n a blackguard's your master?" now asked Ben, thinking to get some information in return.

"*Hush!*" replied Samuel, astonished at Ben's freedom of speech, a thing not altogether understood in the country.

"A bad 'un, I'll be bund," continued the little rascal, "or he wouldn't see you mooning about in such a rumbustical apology for a coat, with laps that scarce cover you decently," reaching behind the aged postboy, and taking up Mr. Samuel's fan-tail as he spoke. "I never sees a servant in a cutty-coat without swearing his master's a screw. Now these droll things such as you have on are just what the great folks in London give their flunkeys to carry coals and make up fires in, but never to go staring from home with. Then your country folks get hold of them and think, by clapping such clowns as you in them, to make people believe that they have other coats at home. To tell the truth now, old baggy-breeches, have you another coat of any sort?"

"Yee'as," replied Samuel Strong, "I've a fustian one."

"Vot, *you* a fustian coat!" repeated Benjamin in astonishment, "vy I thought you were a flunkey!"

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"So I am," replied Samuel, "but I looks ater a hus and shay as well."

"Crikey!" cried Benjamin, "here's a figure futman wot looks arter a 'oss and shay. Vy you'll be vot they call a 'man of all vork,' a wite nigger—a wite Uncle Tom in fact! Dear me," added he, eyeing him in a way that drew a peal of laughter from the party, "vot a curious beast you must be! I shouldn't wonder now if you could mow?"

"With any man," replied Samuel, thinking to astonish Benjamin with his talent.

"And sow?"

"Yee'as, and sow."

"And ploo?" (plough).

"Never tried—daresay I could though."

"And do you feed the pigs?" inquired Benjamin.

"Yee'as, when Martha's away."

"And who's Martha?"

"Whoy she's a widder woman, that lives a back o' the church.—She's a son aboard a steamer, and she goes to see him whiles."

"Your governor's an apothecary, I suppose, by that queer button," observed Benjamin, eyeing Sam's coat. "Wot we call a chemist and druggist in London. Do you look after the red and green winder bottles now? Crikey, he don't look as though he lived on physic altogether, do he?" added Benjamin, turning to Bill Brown, the helper, amid the general laughter of the company.

"My master's a better man than ever you'll be, you little ugly sinner," replied Samuel Strong, breaking into a glow, and doubling a most serviceable-looking fist on his knee.

"We've only your word for that," replied Benjamin; "he don't look like a werry good 'un by the way he rigs you out. 'Ow many slaveys does he keep?"

"Slaveys," repeated Samuel; "slaveys, what be they?"

"Vy, cook-maids and suchlike hanimals—women in general."

"Ow, two—one to clean the house and dress the dinner, t'other to milk the cows and dress the childer."

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"Oh, you 'ave childer, 'ave you, in your 'ouse?" exclaimed Benjamin in disgust. "Well, come, ours is bad, but we've nothing to ekle (equal) that. I wouldn't live where there are brats for no manner of consideration."

"You've a young Missis, though, haven't you?" inquired the aged postboy, adding, "at least there was a young lady came down in the chay along with the old folk."

"That's the niece," replied Benjamin—"a jolly nice gal she is too—often get a tissy out of her—that's to say, she don't give me them herself exactly, but the young men as follows her do, so it comes to the same thing in the end. She has a couple of them, you see; first one pays and then t'other. Green, that's him of Tooley Street, gives shillings because he has plenty; then Stobbs, wot lives near Boroughbridge, gives half-crowns because he hasn't much. Then Stobbs is such a feller for kissin' of the gals.—'Behave yourself or I'll scream,' I hears our young lady say, as I'm a-listenin' at the door. 'Don't,' says he, kissin' of her again, 'you'll hurt your throat,—let me do it for you.' Then to hear our old cove and Stobbs talk about 'unting of an evening over their drink, you'd swear they were as mad as 'atters. They jump, and shout, and sing, and talli-ho! till they whiles bring the street-keeper to make them quiet."

"You had a fine run t'other day, I hear," observed Joe, the deputy-helper, in a deferential tone to Mr. Brady.

"Uncommon!" replied Benjamin, shrugging up his shoulders at the recollection of it, and clearing the low bars of the grate out with his toe.

"They tell me your old governor tumbled off," continued Joe, "and lost his 'oss."

"Werry like," replied Benjamin, with a grin, "he generally does tumble hoff. I'm dashed if it arn't a disgrace to an 'oss to be ridden by such a lubber! A great fat beast! he's only fit for a vater-carriage." "Haw! haw! haw! haw! haw! haw!" went the roar of laughter among the party. "Haw! haw! haw! haw! haw!" pealed the second edition.

"He's a precious old file too," resumed the little urchin,

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elated at the popularity he was acquiring. "To hear him talk, I'm blow'd if you wouldn't think he'd ride over an 'ouse, and yet somehow or other, he's never seen after they go away, unless it be bowling along the 'ard road;—t'other mornin' we had as fine a run as ever was seen, and he wanted to give in in the middle of it, and yesterday he stood starin' like a stuck pig in the wood, stead of ridin' to his 'ounds. If I hadn't been as lively as a lark, and lept like a louse, we should never have seen an 'ound no more. They'd have run slap to France, or whatever there is on the far side of the hill, if the world's made any further that way. Well, I rides, and rides, for miles and miles, as 'ard as ever the 'oss could lay legs to the ground, over everything, 'edges, ditches, gates, stiles, rivers, determined to stick by 'em,—see wot a mug I've got with rammin' through the briars—feels just as if I'd had it teased with a pair of wool-combs; howsomever, I did, and I wouldn't part company with them, and the consequence was, we killed the fox—my eyes, such a wopper!—longer than that," said he, stretching out both his arms, "and as big as a bull—fierce as fury—flew at my snout—nearly bit it off—kept a hold of him though—and worried his soul out—people all pleased—farmer's wife in particklar—offered me a drink o' milk—axed for some jackey—had none, but gave me whiskey instead.—Vill any man here sky a copper for a quartern of gin?" inquired Benjamin, looking round the party. "Then who'll stand a penny to my penny, and let me have a first go?" No one closing with either of these handsome offers, Ben took up his tops, looked at the soles, then replacing them before the fire, felt in his stable-jacket pocket, which was lying over his own saddle, and bringing out a very short, dirty old clay-pipe, he filled it out of the public tobacco-box of the saddle-room, and very complacently crossing his legs, proceeded to smoke. Before he had time to make himself sick, the first pair boy out interrupted him by asking what became of his master during the run.

"Oh! dashed if I know," replied Benjamin, "but that reminds me of the best of the story—We killed our fox, you

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see, and there were two or three 'ossmen up, who took each a fin, and I took the tail, which I stuck through my 'oss's front, and gathering the dogs, I set off towards home, werry well pleased with all I had done. Well, after riding a very long way, axing my way, for I was quite a stranger, I came over a hill at the back of the wood where we started from, when what should I see in the middle of a big ploughed field but the old 'un himself, an 'unting of his 'oss that had got away from him. There was the old file in his old red coat and top-boots, flounderin' away among the stiff clay, with a hundred-weight of dirt stickin' to his heels, gettin' the 'oss first into one corner and then into another, and all but catchin' hold of the bridle, when the nag would shake his head, as much as to say, 'Not yet, old chap,' and trot off to the hopposite corner, the old 'un grinnin' with hanger and wexation and followin' across the deep wet ridge and furrow in his tops, reg'larly churnin' the water in them as he went.

"Then the 'oss would begin to eat, and Jorrock's would take 'Bell's Life' or the 'Field' out of his pocket and pretend to read, sneaking nearer and nearer all the time. When he got a few yards off, the 'oss would stop and look round as much as to say, 'I sees you, old cock,' and then old J. would begin coxin'—'*Whoay*, my old feller, *who-ay—who-ay*, my old bouy' (Benjamin imitating his master's manner by coaxing the old postboy), until he got close at him again, when the 'oss would give a half-kick and a snort, and set off again at a quiet jog-trot to the far corner again, old J. grinnin' and wowin' wengeance against him as he went.

"At last he spied me a-lookin' at him through the high 'edge near the gate at the corner of the field, and cuttin' across he cried, 'Here, Binjimin! BINJIMIN, I say!' for I pretended not to hear him, and was for cuttin' away, 'lend me your quad a minute to go and catch mine upon;' so, accordingly, I got down, and up he climbed. 'Let out the stirrups four 'oles,' said he, quite consequential, shuffling himself into his seat; 'Vot, you've cotched the fox, 'ave ye?' said he, lookin' at the brush danglin' through the 'ead stall. 'Yes,' says I to him,

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says I, 'we've *cotched* him.' Then vot do you think says he to me? Vy, says he to me, says he, 'Then cotch my 'oss,' and away the old wagrant went, 'oss, 'ounds, brush, and all, tellin' everybody he met as how he'd cotched the fox, and leavin' me to run about the ploughed land after his great hairy-heel'd nag—my tops baint dry yet, and never will, I think," added Benjamin, putting them closer to the fire, and giving it another poke with his toe.

"What'n 'osses does he keep?" inquired the return postboy.

"Oh, precious rips, I assure you, and no mistake. Bless your 'eart, our old chap knows no more about an 'oss than an 'oss knows about him, but to hear him talk—Oh, crikey! doesn't he give them a good character, especial ven he wants to sell vun. He von't take no one's advice neither. Says I to him t'other mornin' as he was a feelin' of my 'oss's pins, 'That ere 'oss would be a precious sight better if you'd blister and turn him out for the vinter.' 'Blister and turn him out for the vinter! you little rascal,' said he, lookin' as though he would eat me, 'I'll cut off your 'ead and sew on a button, if you talks to me about blisterin'.' Says I to him, says I, 'You're a thoroughbred old hidiot for talking as you do, for there isn't a grum in the world what doesn't swear by blisters!' I'd blister a cork leg if I had one," added Benjamin, "so would any grum. Blisterin' against the world, says I, for everything except the worms. Then it isn't his confounded stupidity only that one has to deal with, but he's such an unconscionable old screw about feeding of his 'osses—always sees every feed put afore them, and if it warn't for the matter of chopped inions (onions) that I mixes with their corn, I really should make nothing out of my stable, for the old 'un pays all his own bills, and orders his own stuff, and ven that's the case those base mechanics of tradesmen never stand nothin' to no one."

"And what do you chop the onions for, Mr. Benjamin?" inquired Samuel Strong.

"Chop inions for!" exclaimed Ben with astonishment; "and is it possible that you've grown those great fiery viskers on either side of your chuckle-head and not be hup to the

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chopped inion rig? My eyes, but you'll never be able to keep a *gal*, I think! Vy you double-distilled fool——"

"Come, sir," interrupted Samuel, again doubling his enormous fist, that would almost have made a head for Benjamin, amid a general roar of laughter, "keep a clean tongue in your head, or I'll knock your teeth down your throat."

"Oh, you're a man of that description, are you!" exclaimed Benjamin, pretending to be in a fright, "you don't look like a dentist either, somehow—poor hignorant hass. Vy the chopped inion rig be just this—you must advance a small brown out of your own pocket to buy an inion, and chop it werry small. Then s'pose your chemist and druggist chap gives his 'oss four feeds a day (vich I s'pose will be three more nor he does), and sees the grain given, which some wicked old warmints will do, you take the sieve, and after shakin' the corn, and hissins' at it well, just take half a handful of chopped inion out of your jacket pocket, as you pass up to the 'oss's 'ead, and scatter it over the who'ats, then give the sieve a shake, and turn the whole into the manger. The governor seeing it there, will leave, quite satisfied that the 'oss has had his dues, and perhaps may get you out of the stable for half an hour or so, but that makes no odds—when you goes back you'll find it all there, and poulterers like it none the worse for the smell of the inions. That, and pickin' off postage stamps, is about the only parquisite I has."

"Now, Mr. Von-eye," said he, turning to Bill Brown, the one-eyed helper, "is it time for my 'osses to have their bucket of water and kick in the ribs?"

The time for this luxurious repast not having arrived, Benjamin again composed himself in his corner with his pipe, and the party sat in mute astonishment at his wonderful precocity.

The return postboy (whose time was precious) at length broke silence by asking Benjamin if he was living with his first master.

"'Deed am I," replied Ben, knocking the ashes out of his

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pipe, “and had I known as much of sarvice as I does now, I’d have staid at school all my life—Do what they will at school, they carn’t make you larn, and there’s always plenty of play-time. Crikey, ’ow well I remembers the day our old cock kidnapped me. Me and putty-faced Joe, and Peter Pink-eye Rogers, were laying our heads together how we could sugar old Mother Gibb’s milk—that’s she as keeps the happple and purple sugar-stick stall by the skittle-ground at the Royal Artillery-man, on Pentonville Hill; well, we were dewising how we should manage to get her to give us tick for two pennorth of Gibraltar-rock, when Mr. Martin, the ’ead master, and *tail* master too, I may call him, for he did all the flogging, came smiling in with a fat stranger at his ’eels, in a broad-brimmed castor, and ’Essian boots with tassels werry much of the cut of old Paul Pry, that they used to paint upon the ’busses and pint pots, though I doesn’t see no Paul Prys nowadays.

“Well, this ’ere chap was old Jorrocks, and hup and down the school he went, lookin’ first at one bye (boy) and then at another, the master all the while hegging him on, just as the old ’un seemed to take a fancy, swearing they was *all* the finest byes in the school, just as I’ve since ’eard old J. himself chaunting of his ’osses ven he’s ’ad one for to sell; but still the old file was difficult to suit—some were too long in the body, some in the legs, others too short, another’s ’ead was too big, and one whose nose had been flattened by a brickbat from a Smithfield drover’s bye, didn’t please him. Well, on he went, hup one form, down another, across the rest, until he got into the middle of the school, where the byes sit face to face, with their books on their knees, instead of havin’ a desk afore them, and the old cock havin’ got into the last line, began hexamining of them werry closely, fearin’ he was not goin’ for to get suited.

“‘Werry rum, Mr. Martin,’ said he, ‘werry rum; I’ve been to the kilt and bare-legged school in ’Atton Garding, the green coat and yellow breeches in ’Ackney, the red coat and blue vestkits at ’Olloway, the sky-blues and jockey-caps at Paddington Green, and found nothin’ at all to my mind; must be gettin’ out of the breed of nice little useful bouys, I fear,’ said

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he, and just as he said the last words, he came afore me, with his 'ands behind his back, and one 'and was open as if he wanted summut, so I spit in it.

"'Hooi! Mr. Martin,' roared he, jumpin' round, 'here's a bouy spit in my 'and! the biggest gog wotever was seen!' showing his mauley to Martin with it all runnin' off; and Martin seeing who was behind, werry soon fixed upon me—" You little dirty, disreputable 'bomination,' said he, seizing of me by the collar, at least wot should have been a collar, for at the Corderoy's they only give us those quaker-like upright sort of things, such as old fiery-face there," looking at Samuel Strong, "has on. Says Martin to me, says he, laying hold on me werry tight, 'Vot the deuce and old Davey do you mean by insultin' a gen'leman that will be Lord Mayor? Sir, I'll flog you within half a barley-corn of your life!'

"'Beg pardon, sir, beg pardon, sir,' I cried; 'thought the gen'leman had a sore 'and, and a little hointment 'd do it good.'

"'Haw! haw! haw!' roared Jorrocks, taking out a red cotton wipe and rubbing his 'and dry. 'Haw! haw! haw! werry good—promisin' bouy that, I thinks, promisin' bouy that, likes them with mischief—likes them with mischief, poopeys (puppies) and bouys—never good for nothin' unless they 'ave.—Don't you mind,' said he, pokin' Martin in the ribs with his great thick thumb—'Don't you mind Beckford's story 'bout the pointer and the turkeys?' Martin didn't, so J. proceeded to tell it afore all the school. 'Ye see,' said he, 'a gent gave another a pointer poop, and inquiring about it a short time after, the gent who got it said he feared it wasn't a-goin' to do him any good, cos as how it hadn't done him any 'arm. But meetin' him again a fortnight arter, he changed his tune, and thought well on him, for,' says he, 'he's killed me heighteen turkeys since I saw you'—haw! haw! haw!—he! he! he!—ho! ho! ho!'"—a guffaw in which the saddle-room party joined.

When the laughter subsided, Ben was unanimously requested to continue his narrative.

"And what did the old gent say about you?" asked Sam,

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expecting to hear that Ben got a good thrashing for his dirty, disrespectful conduct.

“O, why,” replied Ben, considering—“O, why, arter he had got all quiet again, and his wipe put back into his pocket, he began handlin’ and lookin’ at me, and then, arter a good examination, he says to Martin, quite consequential-like—‘Ow old’s the rogue?’

“Now Martin know’d no more about me than I know’d about Martin; but knowin’ the hage that Jorrocks wanted a bye of, why, in course, he said I was just of that age, and knowin’ that I should get a precious good hiding for spittin’ in the old covey’s ’and, if I staid at the Corderoy’s, why I swore that I was uncommon fond of ’osses, and gigs, and ’arness, and such like, and after the old file had felt me well about the neck, for he had an ide that if a bye’s big in the neck in course o’ time he’ll get big all over, he took me away, promising Martin the two quarterages our old gal had run in arrear for my larning—though hang me I never got none—out o’ my wage, and would ye believe it, the old gudgeon kept me goin’ on from quarter to quarter, for I don’t know ’ow many quarters, saying he hadn’t viped off the old score for my schoolin’, just as if I had any business to pay it; at last, one day as I was a-rubbin’ down the chestnut ’oss as he sold to the chap in Tooley Street, he comes into the stable, full of pride, and I thought rather muzzy, for he bumped first agin one stall and then agin another, so says I to him, says I, ‘Please, sir, I vants for to go to the Vells this evening.’

“‘To the Vells!’ repeated he, staring with astonishment—‘To the Vells!—Wot Vells?’

“‘*Bagnigge!*’ said I; and that’s a place, Mr. Baconface,” observed Ben, turning to Samuel Strong, “that you shouldn’t be hung without seeing—skittles, bowls, stalls all around the garding, like stables for ’osses, where parties take their tea and XX—all painted sky-blue with red panels—gals in shiny vite gowns and short sleeves, bare down the neck, singing behind the horgan with hostrich feathers in their ’eads—all beautiful—admission tuppence—a game at skittles for a penna—and

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everything elegant and quite genteel—mustn't go in that queer coat of yours though, or they'd take you for a Bedlamite, and may be send you to the hulks—queer chaps the Londoners—Once know'd a feller, quite as queer a lookin' dog as you, barrin' his nose, which was a bit better, and not so red. Well, he had a rummish cove of a governor, who clapt him into a nut-brown suit, with bright basket buttons, and a glazed castor, with a broad welwet band 'all round his 'at,' and as he was a mizzlin' along Gower Street, where his master had just come to live from over t'other side of the vater, vot should he meet, but one of the new polish (police), who seeing such a hobject, insisted he was mad; and nothin' would sarve him, but that he was mad; and avay he took him to the station 'ouse, and from thence afore the beak, at Bow Street, and nothin' but a-sendin' for the master to swear that they were his clothes and that he considered them livery, saved the fellow from transportation, for if he'd stolen the clothes he couldn't have been more galvanised than when the new polish grabbed him.

"Well, but that isn't what I was a-goin' to tell you about. Blow these boots," said he, stooping down and turning them again, "they never are goin' for to dry. Might as well have walked through the Serpentine in them. I was goin' to tell you of the flare-up the old 'un and I had about the Vells. 'Well,' says I to him, says I, 'I vants for to go to the Vells.'

"'Vot Vells?' said he.

"'Bagnigge,' says I. 'Bagnigge be d——d,' said he,—no he didn't say, 'be d——d,' for the old 'un never swears except he's houltrageously hangry. But, howsomever, he said I shouldn't go to the Vells, for as 'ow Mrs. Muffin and the seven Miss Muffins, from Primrose Hill, were comin' to take their scald with him that evening, and he vanted me to carry the hurn, while Batsey buttered and 'anded round the bread.

"'Well,' but says I to him, says I, 'that don't hargufy. If I'm a grum, I'm a grum; if I'm a butler, I'm a butler; but it's out of all conscience and calkilation expectin' a man to be both grum and butler. Here 'ave I been a-cleanin' your useless screws of hosses, and weshing your hugly chay till I'm fit to

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faint, in horder that I might have a night of enjoyment to myself, and then you wants me to carry vater to your nasty old boiler. A man should have double wage, 'stead of none at all, to stand such vork.'

"'Ow do you mean, none at all?' said he, grinnin' with anger. 'Doesn't I pay your old mother a sovereign annually four times a year?'

"'Vot's that to me?' said I. 'My mother don't do your work, does she?'

"'Dash my vig!' said he, gettin' into a reg'lar blaze. 'You little ungrateful 'ound, I'll drown you in a bucket of barley water,' and so we got on from bad to worse, until he swore he'd start me, and get another bowy from the Corderoy's.

"'Quite unanimous,' said I, 'quite unanimous. In course you'll pay up my wages afore I go, and that will save me the trouble of taking of you to Hicks Hall.' At the werry word, 'Hicks Hall,' the old gander turned quite green and began to soften. 'Now, Binjimin,' said he, 'that's werry unkind o' you. If you had the Hen and Chickens comin' to take their pum-paginous aqua (which he says is French for tea and coffee) with you, and you wanted your boiler carried, you'd think it werry unkind of Batsey if she wouldn't give you a lift.' Then he read a long lector about doing as one would be done by, and all that sort of gammon that Martin used to cram us with of a Sunday. Till at last it ended in his givin' me a half-crown to do what he wanted, on the understandin' that it was none of my vork, and I says that a chap wot does everything he's bid, like that suckin' Sampson there," eyeing Samuel Strong with the most ineffable contempt, "is only fit to be a tinker's jack-ass." Samuel looked as though he would annihilate the boy as soon as he made up his mind where to hit him, and Benjamin, unconscious of all danger, stooped, and gave the eternal tops another turn.

"We never heard nothin' of your comin' until three days afore you cast up," observed Bill Brown, with a broad grin on his countenance at Benjamin's audacity and Samuel's anger.

"It wer'n't werry likely that you should," replied Benjamin,

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looking up, "for as 'ow we hadn't got our own consent much afore that. Our old cove is a reg'lar word-and-a-blow man. If he does, he does, and if he don't, why he lets it alone. Give the old 'un his due, he's none o' your talkin' chaps, wot's always for doin' somethin', only they don't. He never promised me a cow-hidin' yet, but he paid it with interest. As soon as ever he got the first letter, I know'd there was somethin' good in the wind; for he gave me half a pot of his best marmeylad, and then a few days after he chucked me a golden sovereign, tellin' me go and buy a pair of new tops, or as near new as I could get them for the money."

"And what did you pay for them?" inquired both postboys at once, for the price of top-boots is always an interesting subject to a stable-servant.

"Guess!" replied Benjamin, holding them up, adding, "mind, they are nothing like now what they were when I bought them; the Jew told me, though it don't do to believe above half what those gents tell you, that they belonged to the Markiss of Castlereagh's own tiger, and that he had parted with them because they didn't wrinkle in quite as many folds as his Majesty wished. Here was the fault," continued Benjamin, holding one of the boots upon his hand and pressing the top downwards to make it wrinkle. "You see it makes but eight wrinkles between the top and the 'eel, and the Markiss's gen'leman swore as how he would never be seen in a pair wot didn't make nine, so he parted with them; and as I entered 'Olyvell Street from the east, I spied them 'anging on the pegs at Levy Aaron's, that's the first Jew vot squints on the left 'and side of the way, for there are about twenty of them in that street with queer eyes.

"'Veskit!' said he, 'vashin' veskit, werry sheep; half nothin' in fact,' just as these barkers always chaff.

"'No,' said I, passing on—'You don't s'pose I wears cast-offs!'

"'Clow for shell,' then said he—'Bes'h price, bes'h price.'

"'Nor to shell neither,' said I, mimickin' of him. 'I'll swap my shoes for a pair of tops if you like.'

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“‘Vot vill you give in?’ axed Levy Aaron.

“‘Nothin’,’ said I, determined to begin low enough.

“‘Valk in then,’ said he, quite purlite; ‘onour of your custom’s quite enough,’ so in I went. Such a shop! full o’ veskits covered with gold and flowers, and lace, and coats without end, with the shop sides, each as high as a haystack, full o’ nothin’ but trousers and livery breeches.

“‘Sit down, shir,’ said he, ’anding me a chair without a back, while his missis took the long stick from behind the door with a hook, and fished down several pairs of tops. They had all sorts and sizes, and all colours too. Mahogany, vite, rose-colour, painted vons; but I kept my eye on the low pair I had seen outside, till at last Mrs. Levy Aaron handed them through the winder. I pulls one on.

“‘Uncommon fit,’ said Levy Aaron, slappin’ the sole to feel if all my foot was in; ‘much better leg than the Markiss o’ Castlereagh’s tiger; you’ll live with a Duke before you die.’

“‘Let’s have on t’other,’ said I.

“‘Von’s as good as both,’ said he. ‘Oh!’ says I, twiggin’ vot he was after—‘If you thinks I’m a man to bolt with your boots, you’re mistaken;’ so I kicked off the one I had on, and bid him ’and me my shoes. Well, then he began to bargain—‘Thirty shilling and the shoes.’ I was werry angry and wouldn’t treat. ‘Five-and-twenty shilling *without* the shoes, then.’ Still I wouldn’t touch. ‘Give me my castor,’ said I, buttonin’ up my pocket with a slap, and lookin’ werry wicious. ‘You’re a nasty suspicious old warmint.’ Then the Jew began to soften. ‘Onour bright, he meant no offence.’ ‘One shovereign then he vod take.’ ‘Give me my castor,’ said I.

“‘Good mornin’, Mrs. Jewaster,’ which means female Jew. ‘Seventeen and sixpence!’ ‘Go to the devil,’ said I. ‘Come, then, fifteen shillin’ and a paper bag to put them in.’ ‘No,’ said I, ‘I’ll give you ten.’ ‘Done,’ said he, and there they are. A nice polish they had when I got them, but the ploughed land has taken the shine off. Howsomever, I s’pose they’ll touch up again?’”

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“Not they,” replied Bill Brown, who had been examining one of them very minutely. “They are made of nothing but brown paper!”

“Brown paper be ‘anged!” exclaimed Benjamin. “Your ‘ead’s more like made of brown paper.”

“Look there, then!” rejoined Bill Brown, running his thumb through the instep, and displaying the brown paper through the liquid varnish with which it had been plentifully smeared.

“*Haw! haw! haw! haw! haw! haw! haw!*” pealed the whole of the saddle-room party, in the midst of which Ben bolted with his brown-paper boots.

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CHAPTER XVI.

SIR ARCHEY DEPECARDE.



S yet our distinguished friend was in no position for taking the field, for though he had got a pack of hounds—such as they were—he had neither huntsman to hunt them, nor horses for a huntsman to ride if he had one. He was therefore in a very unfinished condition. Horses, however, are soon got, if a man has only money to pay for them, and a master of hounds being clearly the proper person to buy all the horses that other people want to sell, Mr. Jorrocks very soon had a great many very handsome offers of that sort. Among others he received a stiffish, presenting-his-compliments note, from the celebrated gambler, Sir Archibald Depecarde, of Pluckwelle Park, and the Albany, London, stating that he had a very fine bay horse that he modestly said was too good for his work, and which he should be glad to see in such good hands as Mr. Jorrocks's. Sir Archey, as many of our readers doubtless know—some perhaps to their cost—is a very knowing hand, always with good-looking, if not good horses, which he is ready to barter, or play for, or exchange in any shape or way that conduces to business. His *recherché* little dinners in the Albany are not less famous for “do's” than his more extended hospitality at Pluckwelle Park, whither he brings such of his flats as require more deliberate preparation and treatment than the racket of London allows. Now our friend Mr. Jorrocks, though not exactly swallowing all the butter that was offered him, had no objection to see if there was anything to be made of Sir Archey's

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horse, so by way of being upsides with him in dignity, he replied as follows:—

“M. F. H. John Jorrocks presents his compliments to Sir Archibald Depecarde, and in reply to his favour begs to say that he will take an early hopportunity of drivin’ over to Pluckwelle Park to look at his quadruped, and as the M. F. H. ’ears it is a goodish distance from Handley Cross, he will bring his nightcap with him, for where the M. F. H. dines he sleeps, and where the M. F. H. sleeps he breakfasts.”

Sir Archey thought the answer rather cool—especially from a mere tradesman to a man of his great self-importance, but being of opinion that there is no account between man and man that money will not settle, he determined to square matters with the M. F. H. by putting an extra 5*l.* or 10*l.* on the horse. He therefore resolved to pocket the affront and let matters take their chance.

As good as his word, one afternoon a few days after, our plump friend was seen navigating his vehicle, drawn by a Duncan Nevin screw, along the sinuosities of Sir Archibald’s avenue, in the leisurely way of a gentleman eyeing the estate, and gaining all the information he could by the way; and having arrived at the Corinthian columned portico, where he was kept waiting longer than he liked, he was shocked to find, by the unlocking and unbolting of the door, that Sir Archey was “from home”—“just gone to town”—(to look after a gambling-house in which he had a share on the sly).

“*Dash my vig!*” exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks, nearly stamping the bottom of the vehicle out with his foot, and thinking whether it was possible to tool Duncan Nevin’s hack back to Handley Cross. “*Dash my vig!*” repeated he, “didn’t he know I was a-comin’?”

“Beg pardon, sir,” replied the footman, rather abashed at the Jorrocks vehemence (who he at first took for a prospectus man or an atlas-monger)—“Beg pardon, sir, but I believe Mrs. Markham, sir, has a message for you, sir—if you’ll allow me, sir, I’ll go and see, sir.”

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"Go," grunted Mr. Jorrocks, indignant at the slight thus put on his M. F. H.-ship.

The footman presently returned, followed by a very smiling comely-looking personage, dressed in black silk, with sky-blue ribbons in her jaunty little cap and collar, who proceeded in a most voluble manner to express with her hands, and tongue, and eyes, Sir Archibald's regrets that he had been suddenly summoned to town, adding that he had left word that they were to make the expected guest as comfortable as possible and show him every possible care and attention.

"Ah, well, that's summut like," smiled Mr. Jorrocks, with a jerk of his head, thinking what a good-looking woman she was. In another instant he was on the top step of the entrance beside her, giving her soft hand a sly squeeze as she prepared to help him out of his reversible coat. "Take the quad to the stable," said he to the footman, "and bid 'em take great care on 'im"—adding, with a leer at the lady, "gave a-most a 'underd for him." So saying, hack-like, the horse was left to take its chance, while our fat friend followed the fair lady into the library.

"I'll have a fire lighted directly," observed she, looking round the spacious apartment, which, like many bachelors' company rooms, felt pretty innocent of fuel.

"*Fiddle the fire!*" exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks, "fiddle the fire! Dessay you've got a good 'un in your room,—*I'll go there.*"

"*Couldn't for the world,*" whispered Mrs. Markham, with a shake of her head, glancing her large hazel eyes lovingly upon Jorrocks. "What! if Sir Archey should hear!"

"Oh, he'll *never* hear," rejoined our friend confidently.

"*Wouldn't he?*" retorted Mrs. Markham. "You don't know what servants are if you think that. Bless ye! they watch me just as a cat watches a mouse."

"Well, then, you must come in to *me*," observed Mr. Jorrocks, adding—"I can't be left mopin' alone, you know."

"It must be after they've gone to bed, then," whispered the lady.

A hurrying housemaid now appearing with a red-hot poker,



MR. JORROCKS IN CLOVER.

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Mrs. Markham drew back and changed the whispering conversation into an audible—

“And please sir, what would you like to ’ave for dinner, sir?”

“Oh, I don’t care,” shrugged Mr. Jorrocks. “\Wot ’ave you got?”

“There’s soup, and fish, and meat, and game, and poultry; whatever you like to ’ave, I daresay.”

“*Humph*,” mused Mr. Jorrocks, wishing the housemaid further, “I’ll ’ave a bit o’ fish, with a beef-steak, and a fizzant to follow, say——”

“No soup?” observed Mrs. Markham.

“No; I doesn’t care nothin’ ’bout soup, ’less it’s turtle,” replied he with a toss of his head.

“I’m afraid there is no turtle, sir,” replied Mrs. Markham, well knowing there was not. “Gravy, macaroni, mulligatawney.”

“No, jest fish, and steak, and fizzant,” rejoined Mr. Jorrocks. “Cod and hoister sauce, say—and p’raps a couple o’ dozen o’ hoisters to begin with,—jest as a whet, you know.”

“Any *sweets*?” asked the lady significantly.

“No, I’ll ’ave my sweets arter,” winked Mr. J., licking his lips.

“Open tart, apple fritters, omelette, anything of that sort?” continues she, intimating with her eye that the loitering housemaid might hear his answer.

“No; I’ll fill hup the chinks wi’ cheese,” replied Mr. Jorrocks, stroking his stomach.

“And wine?” asked the housekeeper, adding, “the butler’s away with Sir Archey, but I ’ave the key of the cellar.”

“That’s all right!” exclaimed our friend, adding, “I’ll drink his ’ealth in a bottle of his best.”

“Port?” asked Mrs. Markham.

“Port in course,” replied Mr. J. with a hoist of his eyebrows, adding, “but mind, I doesn’t call the oldest the best—far from it—it’s oftentimes the wust. No,” continued he, “give me a good fruity wine; a wine with a grip o’ the gob, that leaves a mark on the side o’ the glass; not your weak woe-begone trash, that would be water if it wasn’t wine.”

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"P'raps you'd like a little champagne at dinner," suggested Mrs. Markham.

"Champagne," repeated Mr. Jorrocks thoughtfully, "champagne! Well, I wouldn't mind a little champagne, only I wouldn't like it hiced; doesn't want to 'ave all my teeth set a-chatterin' i' my 'ead; harn't got so far advanced in gentility as to like my wine froze—I'm a Post Office Directory, not a Peerage man," added he with a broad grin.

"Indeed," smiled Mrs. Markham, not exactly understanding the simile.

"Folks talk about the different grades o' society," observed Mr. Jorrocks, with a smile and a pshaw, "but arter all said and done there are but two sorts o' folks i' the world—Peerage folks, and Post Office Directory folks; Peerage folks, wot think it's all right and proper to do their tailors, and Post Office Directory folks wot think it's the greatest sin under the sun not to pay twenty shillin's i' the pund—greatest sin under the sun 'cept kissin' and then tellin'," added he in an undertone, with a wink, as he drew his hand across his jolly lips.

"Well, then, you'll have it iced," observed Mrs. Markham, in a tone for the housemaid to hear. "Just a few minutes plunge in the pail—enough to dull the glass, p'r'aps?" continued she.

"Well," mused our friend, "as you are mistress o' the revels, I'll leave that to you; and I makes no doubt," added he, with another sly squeeze of her soft hand, now that the housemaid's back was turned, "I shall fare uncommon well."

And Mrs. Markham, seeing that the maid was bent on outstaying her, sailed away with a stately air, ordering her, in a commanding tone, to "bring some wood to the fire."

And Mr. Jorrocks, we need scarcely say, had a very good dinner, and spent his evening very pleasantly.

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CHAPTER XVII.

THE PLUCKWELLE PRESERVES.



A Look at the Stables.

NEXT morning, in accordance with Sir Archey's injunctions, as Mr. Jorrocks sat at a capital breakfast, Mr. Snapshot, the keeper, sent to know if he would please to go out shooting, or coursing, or rabbiting, and finding that the covers were near the house, and pretty full of pheasants, our M. F. H.

thought he might as well have a "blaze among 'em" before he went home. Accordingly he sought Sir Archey's dressing-room, and borrowed a pair of his best thick shoes and leather gaiters, which, with a fustian coat of the keeper's, made him pretty perfect, and the stables being in the way to the kennels, he thought he might as well see how his hack was, and look at his proposed purchase. Accordingly, preceded by Mr. Snapshot, he passed through a lofty, deserted-looking, cobwebby, ten-stalled stable, with a two-stall one beyond, in

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which were a couple of shooting ponies, of which Mr. Snapshot spoke approvingly; then crossing the central passage, they traversed another two-stall, and entered upon a somewhat better conditioned corresponding stable to the ten.

First, there stood Mr. Jorrocks's hundred-guinea horse, with a wretched old rag of a rug over it, then a pair of better-clothed browns that Snapshot alluded to as "our 'cage 'orses;" then, as Mr. Jorrocks passed on to a bright bang-tailed bay beyond, thinking that would be his friend, Snapshot seized him suddenly by the arm, with a "Take care of 'im, sir! take care!—*He'll kick ye to a certainty!*"

"Wot, he's wicious, is he?" observed Mr. Jorrocks coolly, eyeing the now well laid back ears and exuberant white of the eye.

"*Most vicious brute alive!*" replied Mr. Snapshot. "If he was to get you off, he'd stand considerin' whether he should kick out your right eye or your left."

"*In-deed,*" mused Mr. Jorrocks—"pleasant 'oss to 'ave."

"We're expectin' an old gent from Handley Cross to look at 'im," observed the keeper, "but I think he'll have to be crazier than they say he is afore he buys 'im."

"I think so too," assented Mr. Jorrocks—stumping on out of heels' reach.

They then got the dogs out of the kennel, and proceeded to the pheasants.

Mr. Jorrocks, being out of practice, did not make much of a hand at first, which, coupled with the injunctions all the servants were under to make the stranger as comfortable as possible, induced Snapshot to take him to the home cover, when the pheasants rising in clouds and the hares streaming out like sand ropes, our worthy friend very soon bagged his five brace of pheasants and three hares. Snapshot, now thinking "tipping time" was come, and feeling for his pheasants, proposed a truce, when Mr. Jorrocks, handing him the gun, picked out three brace of the best birds, with which he trudged away, leaving the astonished Snapshot to follow with the rest. Hares he wouldn't take, thinking his riotous hounds

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would kill him plenty of them. He then very coolly locked the pheasants up in his vehicle, and ordering the horse to be put-to, was ready for a start by the time it came to the door. With a loving leave-taking of Mrs. Markham, he was presently in his rattle-trap and away. A favourable road incline with the horse's head towards home, sent the hundred-guinea nag along, and Mr. Jorrocks began to think it "wasn't so bad as it seemed."

As he neared the last unlodged gates in Sir Archey's grounds, he saw another vehicle approaching, and each driver thinking to get the other to open the gate, they timed themselves so as to meet with it between them.

"Sky ye a copper who opens it!" at length exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks, after a good stare at his much muffled up *vis-à-vis*.

"'Eads or tails?" continued he, producing a half-a-crown piece—" 'Eads I win! tails you lose!"

"Heads!" cried the stranger.

"It's tails!" replied Mr. Jorrocks, pretending to look at it, "so you opens it."

The youth then got out and did so.

"Prop it hopen! prop it hopen!" exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks, adding—"There ar'n't no cattle in either field, and it may as well stand that way as not."

The gentleman did as he was bid, drawing his vehicle—a German waggon with three crests (very symptomatic of money)—alongside of Mr. Jorrocks's.

"You'll be a-goin' to Sir Harchey's, I guess," observed Mr. Jorrocks, after scrutinising his fat, vacant face intently.

"I am," replied the stranger.

"Well, I'm just a-comin' from there," continued our friend, stroking his chin complacently, thinking of the pheasants and the fun he had had.

"Indeed," smiled the gentleman.

"He's not at 'ome," observed Mr. Jorrocks.

"At home to *me*," replied the stranger, with a man-of-the-house sort of air.

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"*Humph*," mused Mr. Jorrocks, adding after a pause—"Well, now blow me tight, I shouldn't be at all s'prised, if they're been a-takin' o' me for you. Thought they were sweeter upon me than a mere 'oss-dealin' case required, unless indeed they took me for a most egregious John Ass."

"Hope they've used you well," observed the stranger.

"*Capital*," replied Mr. Jorrocks, "and if it wasn't that I 'ave a 'ticklar engagement, I wouldn't mind returnin' and spendin' the evenin' with you. Independent of a capital dinner, I had just as good a drink as man need wish for. A'most two bottles of undeniable black strap, besides et ceteras, and no more 'eadache than the crop o' my wip."

"Indeed," observed the stranger, thinking he was lucky to escape such a sand-bag.

"True, I assure you," affirmed Jorrocks—"shouldn't know that I'd taken more nor my usual quantity; shot as well as ever I did i' my life this mornin', and altogether I'm uncommon pleased with my jaunt, and that reminds me," continued he, flourishing his whip bag-man-i-cally over his head, and thinking how he had got to the windward of Sir Archey, "you can do summut for me—I'm Mr. Jorrocks, the M. F. H.—you'll most likely have 'eard o' me—I 'unts the country. Well, I've been to look at an 'oss of Sir Harchey's—a werry nice hanimal he is, but 'ardly hup to my weight—I'm a sixteen stunner, you see. 'Ave the goodness to make my compliments to Sir Harchey, and tell 'im I'm werry much 'bliged by his purlite hoffer on 'im, and that I'm werry sorry he wasn't at 'ome, so that I might 'ave 'ad the pleasure o' makin' his personal 'quaintance, as well as that of his Port;" so saying, Mr. Jorrocks shortened his hold of the reins, and dropping the point of his whip scientifically into the Handley Cross hack, bowed to his friend, and bowled away homewards.

And when Sir Archey returned, and found the indignities that had been put upon him, he was exceeding wroth, and vowed vengeance against the grocer.

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CHAPTER XVIII.

A SPORTING LECTOR.



OR some days after Mr. Jorrocks's return from Pluckwelle Park, Diana Lodge was literally besieged with people, offering him horses of every sort, size, and description. A man "wanting a horse"—and, *confound* it! some people are always "wanting" them, and never buy—a man "wanting a horse," we say, is always an object of interest to the idle and unemployed, looking out for horses for other people; and Handley Cross being as idle a place as any, everybody seemed bent upon propagating the great M. F. H.'s wants. Even the ladies, who don't generally bestir themselves in such matters, seemed smitten with the mania; and a horse being a horse with them, the curiosities their inquiries produced were very amusing. The horses that came were of all prices, from a hundred guineas down to thirty shillings; indeed, Mrs. Pearlash, the laundress, intimated that she *might* take "rayther" less than thirty for her old woe-begone white Rosinante. Our worthy M. F. H. was indebted to his wife for the offer of it; Mrs. Jorrocks making the subject of "'osses" one of her standing topics of conversation, as well with her visitors as to all those with whom she came in contact. Having casually mentioned her great sporting-spouse's wants to Mrs. Pearlash, that useful functionary, sticking her fists in her sides for the purpose of revolving the matter in her mind, said, "Well, now, she didn't know but what they *might part* with their horse, and she'd ask her old man;" who readily assented

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to the sale of an animal that could scarcely crawl. Jorrocks was highly indignant when it came, and desired Mrs. J. not to meddle with matters she did not understand.

Mr. Jorrocks, on his part, having about satisfied himself that hunting a pack of hounds was a very different thing to riding after them, as near to them or as far off as he liked, repelled all inquiries as to when he would be going out again, and when he would begin to advertise, by saying, mysteriously, "that he must get things a little forwarder fust." The fact was, he wanted to pick up a huntsman at whip's wages, and had written to sundry friends in the City and elsewhere, describing what he wanted, and intimating that the whip might occasionally have to "'unt the 'ounds when he was away, or anything of that sort." His City friends, who didn't approve of his proceedings, and, moreover, had plenty of other matters to attend to of their own, gave his letters very little heed, if indeed they took any notice of them at all. Some of his old cronies shook their heads, and said they "wished any good might come of it;" while others said "he'd much better have stuck to his shop;" adding a wish that things might continue "serene" in the "lane."

Altogether Jorrocks's proceedings were not approved of in the commercial world, where hunting and gambling are often considered synonymous. He, however, was all swagger and cock-a-hoop, vowing that he had got "the best pack of 'ounds in the world;" adding, that "they would make the foxes cry 'Capevi!'"

Belinda's beauty and unaffected manners drew Mrs. Jorrocks plenty of callers, who soon found herself a much greater woman at Handley Cross than she was in Great Coram Street.

Belinda might have had an offer every day in the week, but somehow the suitors could never get the old girl out of the room—an error into which ladies, who trade in beauty other than that of their own daughters, are very apt to fall. Mrs. Jorrocks wouldn't admit that she was in any ways indebted to Belinda for her company, and of course sat to receive her own guests. Not that Belinda wanted any of their offers; for, as

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Ben intimated, she had a young chap in her eye, who will shortly appear in our pages : but Mrs. Jorrocks, like a skilful old mouser, as she was, did not let that out.

So Belinda was talked of, and toasted, and toasted, and talked of, and "set out" for no end of people. The Jorrocks's funds rose ten per cent. at least from having her, and the Barnington ones were depressed to a similar extent.

Our great M. F. H. not finding any responses to his inquiries for a whip, and being dreadfully anxious to be doing, resolved to make known his wants through the medium of the newspapers ; and while his bold advertisement for a " huntsman " (not a whip who could 'unt the 'ounds occasionally) was working, he bethought him, instead of exposing his incompetence as a huntsman, to display his sporting knowledge in a lecture, in which he could also inculcate the precepts he wished practised towards himself, both at home and in the field.

Accordingly, he enlisted the assistance of Captain Doleful, to whose province such arrangements seemed peculiarly to belong, and the large room of the Dragon was engaged and tastefully fitted up under their joint superintendence. A temporary platform was placed at the far end, surmounted by a canopy of scarlet cloth, tastefully looped up in the centre with an emblematical sporting device, formed of a hunting-cap, a pair of leather breeches, a boot-jack, and three foxes' brushes. Inside the canopy was suspended a green-shaded lamp, throwing a strong light upon the party below, and the room was brilliantly lighted with wax both from the chandeliers and reflecting mirrors against the wall. The doors were besieged long before the appointed hour for commencing, and ere the worthy lecturer made his appearance there was not standing room to be had in any part. The orchestra was also full, and in it "we observed many elegantly-dressed ladies," as the reporters say.

Precisely at eight o'clock Mr. Jorrocks ascended the platform, attended by Captain Doleful, Roger Swizzle, Romeo Simpkins, and Abel Snorem, and was received with the most enthusiastic cheering. He wore the full-dress uniform of the hunt ; sky-blue coat lined with pink silk, canary-coloured shorts, and white

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silk stockings. His neckcloth and waistcoat were white, and a finely-plaited shirt-frill protruded through the stand-up collar of the latter. Bunches of white ribbon dangled at his knees. In his hand he held a roll of notes, while some books of reference and a tumbler of brandy and water were placed by Benjamin on a table at the back of the platform. Benjamin had on his new red frock with blue collar, cord breeches, and white stockings.

After bowing most familiarly to the company, Mr. Jorrocks cleared his voice with a substantial *hem*, and then addressed the meeting.

“Beloved ’earers!—*beloved* I may call you, for though I have not the pleasure of knowin’ many of you, I hope werry soon to make your intimate acquaintance. Beloved ’earers, I say, I have come ’ere this evenin’ for the double purpose of seeing you, and instructin’ of you on those matters that have brought me to this your beautiful and salubrisome town. (Cheers.) Beautiful I may call it, for its architectural proportions are grand, and salubrisome it must be when it boasts so many cheerful, wigorous countenances as I now see gathered around me. (Loud applause.) And if by my comin’, I shall spread the great light of sportin’ knowledge, and enable you to persevere those glowin’ mugs when far removed from these waters, then shall I be a better doctor than either Swizzle or Sebastian, and the day that drew John Jorrocks from the sugars of retirement in Great Coram Street will henceforth remain red-lettered in the mental calendar of his existence. (Loud cheers.) *Red*-lettered did I say? ah! wot a joyous colour to denote a great and glorious ewent! Believe me there is no colour like red—no sport like ’unting.

“Blue coats and canaries,” observed Mr. Jorrocks, looking down at his legs, “are well enough for dancin’ in, but the man wot does much dancin’ will not do much ’unting. But to business—Lectorin’ is all the go—and why should sportin’ be excluded? Is it because sportin’ is its own champion? Away with the idea! Are there no pints on which grey experience can show the beacon lights to ’ot youth and indiscretion?—

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Assuredly there are ! Full then of hardour—full of keenness, one pure concentrated essence of 'unting, John Jorrocks comes to enlighten all men capable of instruction on pints that all wish to be considered conversant with.

"Well did that great man, I think it was Walter Scott, but if it warn't, 'twas little Bartley, the boot-maker, say, that there was no young man wot would not rather have a himputation on his morality than on his 'ossmanship, and yet, how few there are wot really know anything about the matter ! Oh, but if hignorance be bliss 'ow 'appy must they be ! (Loud cheers and laughter.)

"'Unting is the sport of kings, the image of war without its guilt, and only five-and-twenty per cent. of its danger ! In that word, 'unting,' wot a ramification of knowledge is compressed ! The choice of an 'oss—the treatment of him when got—the groomin' at home, the ridin' abroad—the boots, the breeches, the saddle, the bridle, the 'ound, the 'untsman, the feeder, the Fox ! Oh ! how that beautiful word, Fox, gladdens my 'eart, and warms the declinin' embers of my age. (Cheers.) The 'oss and the 'ound were made for each other, and natur threw in the Fox as a connectin' link between the two. (Loud cheers.) He's perfect symmetry, and my affection for him is a perfect paradox. In the summer I loves him with all the hardour of affection ; not an 'air of his beautiful 'ead would I hurt ; the sight of him is more glorious nor the Lord Mayor's show ! but when the hautumn comes—when the brownin' copse and cracklin' stubble proclaim the farmer's fears are past, then, dash my vig, 'ow I glories in pursuin' of him to destruction, and holdin' him above the bayin' pack ! (Loud cheers.)

"And yet," added Mr. Jorrocks thoughtfully, "it ar'n't that I loves the fox less, but that I loves the 'ounds more, as the chap says in the play, when he sticks his friend in the gizzard. (Roars of laughter and applause.)

"The 'oss loves the 'ound, and I loves both ; and it is that love wot brings me to these parts, to follow the all-glorious callin' of the chase, and to enlighten all men capable of illumination. To-night I shall instruct you with a lecture on dealin'.

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“ ‘O who shall counsel a man in the choice of a wife or an ’oss?’ asks that inspired writer, the renowned Johnny Lawrence. ‘The buyer has need of a hundred eyes, the seller of but one,’ says another equestrian conjuror. Who can take up an ’oss book and read ’bout splints, and spavins, and stringalts, and corns, and cuttin’, and farcy, and dropsy, and fever, and thrushes, and grease, and gripes, and mallenders, and sallenders, and ring-bones, and roarin’, etcetera, etceterorum, without a shudder lest such a complication of evils should fall to his lot? Who can expect a perfect ’oss, when he sees what an infinity of hills they are heirs to? I ’opes I haven’t come to ’Andley Cross to inform none on you what an ’oss is, nor to explain that its component parts are four legs, a backbone, an ’ead, a neck, a tail, and other etceteras, too numerous to insert in an ’and-bill, as old Georgey Robins used to say.

“ ‘Eavens, wot a lot of rubbish has been written about ’osses!’ continued the worthy lecturer, casting up his eyes.

“I took a fut rule t’other night and measured off a whole yard and a ’alf of real down-right ’ard printin’ on the single word ’oss; each succeedin’ writer snubbin’ the last, swearin’ he know’d nothin’, until one would expect to arrive at the grand climax of hignorance, instead of gleanin’ wisdom as one went. There was Bartlet, and Bracken, and Gibson, and Griffiths, and Taplin, and Stewart, and Youatt, and ’Ands, and Lawrence, and Wite, and Percival, and Hosmer, and Peters, and Anonymous by ’Ookem, and Wilkinson on Lock-jaw, and Colman, and Sewell, and Happerley, and Caveat Emptier, all snubbin’ each other like so many snobs.

“*Away with them all, say I!*” exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks, throwing out his hands, to the imminent danger of his supporters right and left. “*Away with them all! Away with all such rubbish, say I!* John Jorrocks is the only real enlightened sapient sportsman; and ’ere, ’ere from this lofty heminance I hurls defiance at the whole tribe of word-manglin’, grammar-stranglin’, cotation-crammin’ cocks! bids them to a grand tilt or tournament of jaw, where hevery man may do his best, and I’ll make mince-meat of them all

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—catermauchously chaw them up, as the Americans say. (Loud cheers.)

“But gently, old bouy,” continued he to himself, “you mustn’t be too ’ard on the fools, or you’ll kill ’em out-right; curb your wehemence a little; come, I’ll give you a drop of brandy and water;” saying which Mr. Jorrocks retired to the back of the platform, and took such a swig at the tumbler, as left nothing, as he observed, to “carry over.”

Presently he returned, smacking his lips, and resumed in a more composed tone as follows:—“Talkin’ about writers,” said he, “the best informed man to my mind wot ever wrote on equestrian matters, was Mr. Gambado, who held the distinguished post of ridin’-master to the Doge of Wenice. Hosmer may be more learned, and Happerley more latiney, but for real down-right shrewd hobserwation, the Doge’s man flogs all t’others, as the Kentucky boy said. Most writers go out of their way to bring in summut wot does not belong to the subject, but Gambado sticks to his text like a leech. Hosmer, for instance, tells us that a hostrich can out-strip an ’oss, but what matter does that make, seein’ that no one would like to go cuttin’ across country on a hostrich that could get an ’oss. Another tells us how many ’osses Xerxes had in his army after he passed the Hellespont, but it would have been far more to the purpose to have told us how many Mason or Bartley bought at the last ’Orncastle fair.

“Still I don’t mean to say that Gambado was all over right, for there are points upon which the Doge’s man and I differ, though fashion, in course, has altered things since his time. He writes upon ’osses in general, and says little about those for carryin’ a scarlet, without bringin’ it to shame, which is wot we most want information upon. Some of his positions too are bad. For instance, talkin’ of eyes, he says some people make a great bother about an ’oss’s eyes, jest as if they have anything to do with his haction, and Jeffery says, that if a man chooses to ride without a bridle it may be a matter of moment to him to have an ’oss with an eye or two, but that if he has a bridle, and also a pair of eyes of his own, it is *perfectlie* immaterial



A HORSE WITH ONLY ONE FAULT.

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whether the 'oss sees or not. Now, from this, I think we may infer that the Doge either did not keep 'ounds, or that the country he 'unted was flat and unenclosed, otherwise Gambado would certainlie have felt the inconwenience of ridin' a blind 'un. Indeed, I almost think, from his declining the Rev. Mr. Nutmeg's offer of a mount on his brown 'oss, that Mr. Gambado either was not a sportsman, or had arrived at a time of life when the exertion of 'unting was too great for him.

"The case was this," observed Mr. Jorrocks, taking up the work, "and the advice is as good now as it was then. Nutmeg says, in his letter to the ex-ridin' master, who appears to have been actin' as a sort of chamber counsel on 'oss cases:—'You must know, sir, I am werry fond of 'unting and live in as fine a scentin' country as any in the kingdom. The soil is pretty stiff, the leaps large and frequent, and a great deal of timber to get over. Now, sir, my brown 'oss is a werry capital 'unter; and though he is slow, and I cannot absolutely ride over the 'ounds (indeed the country is so enclosed that I do not see so much of them as I could wish), yet, in the end, he generally brings me in before the 'untsman goes home with the dogs.'

"And here let me observe," said Mr. Jorrocks, breaking off, "that that is neither good sportin' nor good language, and Nutmeg, I should think, had been one of your Macadamizin' happetite 'untin' parsons, or he would neither have talked of ridin' over the 'ounds, or yet being content to draggle up after the worry, and just as the *dogs*, as he calls them, were going home—But let that pass." Mr. Jorrocks then resumed his reading—

"'Now, sir, my brown 'oss is a noble leaper, and never gave me a fall in his life in that way; but he has got a hawkward trick (though he clears everything with his fore legs in capital style) of leaving the other two on the wrong side of the fence; and if the gate or stile happens to be in sound state, it is a work of time and trouble to get his hind legs over. He clears a ditch finely indeed, with two feet, but the others constantly fall in, that it gives me a strange pain in my back, very like

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what is called a lumbago ; and unless you kindly stand my friend and instruct me how I am to bring these hind legs after me, I fear I shall never get rid of it. If you please, sir, you may ride him a-'unting yourself any day you will please to appoint, and you shall be 'eartily welcome.'

"To this letter Gambado replied as follows :—

" ' REVEREND SIR,

" ' Your brown 'oss being so good an 'unter, and as you observe, having so fine a notion of leapin', I should be 'appy if I could be of any service in assistin' you to make his two hind legs follow the others ; but, as you observe, they seem so werry perwerse and obstinate, that I cherish but small 'opes of prewailin' upon them—I have looked and found many such cases, but no cure—However, in examinin' my papers I have found out somethin' that may prove of service to you, in your werry lamentable case—An oat-stealer or ostler has informed me, that it is a common trick played upon bagsters or London riders, when they are not generous to the servants in the inn, for a wicked boy or two to watch one of them as he turns out of the gateway, and to pop a bush or stick under his 'oss's tail, which he instantly brings down upon the stick and 'olds it fast, kickin' at the same time at such a rate as to dislodge the bagman that bestrides him—Suppose then, when your 'oss has flown over a gate or stile in his old way, with his fore legs only, you were to dismount, and clap your vip or stick properly under his tail, and then mount again ; the puttin' him in a little motion will set him on his kickin' principles in a hurry, and it's ten to one but by this means you get his hind legs to follow the others—You will be able, perhaps, to extricate your stick from its place of confinement when you are up and over (if you ar'n't down), but should you not, it is but sixpence gone. I send you this as a mere surmise ; perhaps it may answer ; perhaps not.

" ' I thank you for your offer, which is a werry kind one, but I beg to be excused accepting it ; all my hambition being to add to the theory with as little practice as possible.'

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“‘Add to the theory with as little practice as possible,’” repeated Mr. Jorrocks—“That’s wot a great many writers are anxious to do at the present day—But to proceed—Another circumstance wot leads me to suppose that Jeffery was not an ’unter is this. In some obserwations in his Preface on a portrait of Mr. Gambado that adorns the frontispiece, the editor says that it was done by a friend from memory, and tintured with the prejudice of friendship. ‘Jeffery,’ he says, ‘was not so slim, nor was his eye so poignant; nor was he ever known to be possessed of a pair of top-boots himself, though he often mentions boots in his writings.’

“That I think,” observed Mr. Jorrocks, “is conclusive. But then, what does it prove? Why, that if Gambado, the best of all sportin’ writers, knew nothin’ of ’unting, it is the more incumbent on John Jorrocks to supply the deficiency.

“But whether Gambado, if I may be allowed to speak of him with such familiarity, was a fox-hunter or not, it is quite clear that he possessed a knowledge of ’osses far superior to any man of the present day. ‘The Academy for Grown ’Ossmen’ is a perfect text-book in its way, and when a man has read Gambado’s instructions how to choose an ’oss, how to tackle him properly, in what sort of dress to ride him, how to mount and manage him, how to ride him out, and above all how to ride him ’ome again, dull must be the dog wot has occasion to go to a riding-school.

“There is a wast of fancy about dealin’—far more than relates to the mere colour; indeed some say that colour is immaterial, and there is an old saw about a good ’oss never being of a bad colour, but the first question a green’orn asks is the colour of the prad. Old Steropes says, if you have no predilection that way, choose a mouse-coloured dun, for it has the peculiar advantage of looking equally well all the year round. A black list down the back makes it still more desirable, as the bystanders will suppose you are ridin’ with a crupper, a practice no finished ’ossmen ought to neglect. This latter point, however, is confuted by Gambado, who says, ‘be werry shy of a crupper if your ’oss naturally throws his saddle forward. It will certainlie

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make his tail sore, set him a-kickin', and werry likely bring you into trouble.'

"How perplexin' must all this be to a beginner," exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks, throwing up his hands.

"The height of an 'oss, Gambado says, is perfectly immaterial, provided he is higher behind than before. Nothin' is more pleasin' to a traveller than the sensation of continually gettin' forward; whereas the ridin' of an 'oss of a contrary make is like swarmin' the banisters of a staircase, when, though perhaps you really advance, you feel as if you were goin' backwards.

"Gambado says nothin' about the size of an 'oss's head, but he says he should carry it low, that he may have an eye to the ground and see the better where he steps. Some say the 'ead should be as large as possible, inasmuch as the weight tends to prewent the 'oss from rearin', which is a wice dangerous in the highest degree; my idea is, that the size of the head is immaterial, for the 'oss doesn't go on it, at least he didn't ought to do, I know.

"The ears cannot well be too long, Gambado says, for a judicious rider steers his course by fixin' his eyes between them. This, however, is a disputed point, and old Dickey Lawrence recommends that they should be large and loppin' in a horizontal direction, by which position no rain can possibly enter, and the 'oss will have no occasion to shake his 'ead, a habit which he says not only disturbs the brain, but frequently brings on the mad staggers.

"Here again the doctors differ!

"It seems agreed on all hands that the less an 'oss lifts his fore legs, the easier he will move for his rider, and he will likewise brush all the stones out of his way, which might otherwise throw him down. Gambado thinks if he turns his toes well out, he will disperse them right and left, and not have the trouble of kicking the same stone a second time, but I don't see much adwantage in this, and think he might as well be kickin' the same stone as a fresh one.

"There can be no doubt that a Roman nose like Arterxerxes's

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adds greatly to the gravity of an 'oss's countenance. It has a fine substantial yeoman-like appearance, and well becomes the father of a family, a church dignitary, or a man in easy circumstances.—A Roman nose and a shovel hat are quite unique.—Some think a small eye a recommendation, as they are less exposed to injuries than large ones, but that is a matter of fancy. The nostrils, Lawrence says, should be small, and the lips thick and leathery, which latter property aids the sensibility of the mouth werry considerably.—Some prefer an arched neck to a ewe, but the latter has a fine consequential hair, and ought not to be slighted.

“It may be prejudice, but I confess I likes an 'oss's back wot inclines to a hog bend.—Your slack backs are all werry well for carryin' millers' sacks, but rely upon it there's nothin' like the outward bow for makin' them date their leaps properly. Many men in the Surrey remember my famous 'oss Star-gazer. He was made in that form, and in his leaps threw an arch like the dome of St. Paul's. A long back is a grand thing for a family 'oss.—I've seen my cousin Joe clap six of his brats and his light porter on the back of the old Crockerdile, and the old nag would have carried another if his tail had been tied up.—In the 'unting field, however, one seldom sees more than one man on an 'oss, at a time. *Two* don't look sportin', and the world's governed by appearances.

“Some people object to high blowers, that is, 'osses wot make a noise like steam-engines as they go. I don't see no great objection to them myself, and think the use they are of in clearin' the way in crowded thoroughfares, and the protection they afford in dark nights by preventin' people ridin' against you, more than counterbalance any disconvenience.—Gambado says, a bald face, wall eyes, and white legs, answer the same purpose, but if you can get all four, it will be so much the better.

“There is an author who says the hip-bones should project well beyond the ribs, which form will be found werry convenient in 'ot weather, as the rider may hang his hat on them occasionally, whilst he wipes the perspiration from his brow,



Mr. Enrocks's Lecture on "Mending."

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addin' that that form gives the hannimal greater facility in passin' through stable-doors, but I am inclined to think, that the advice is a little of what the French call *pleasantre*, and we call gammon; at all events, I don't follow it.

"Broken knees is nothin'.—Where, let me ax, is the man with the 'oss that he will swear will never tumble down? Jeffery indeed says, 'Be' sure to buy a broken-kneed 'oss whenever he falls in your way; the best bit of flesh that ever was crossed will certainly come down one day or another; whereas, one that has fallen (and scarified himself pretty tightly) never will again, if he can help it.'

"At an American 'oss sale I read of t'other day, a buyer exclaims—

"'Vy, he's broken-kneed?'

"'Not at all, you mister,' cried the hauctioneer pertly. 'The gen'leman wot sells this 'oss *always* marks his stud on the knee, that he may know 'em again'—*haw! haw! haw!* chuckled Mr. Jorrock; 'Lofty hactioned 'oss!—struck his knee again his tooth!' I once heard a dealer declare on behalf of a broken-kneed 'un in the City.

"There is an old sayin' in Spain, that a man wot would buy a mule without a fault must not buy one at all, and faultless 'osses are equally rare. Gil Blas's mule, if I recollects right, was 'all faults,' and there are many 'osses not much better. To be sure it makes a marvellous difference whether you are representin' the 'oss's qualities to an expectant purchaser, or are treatin' yourself to a bit of unwarnished truth as we all must do occasionally. It is an unpleasant reflection; and says little for the morality of the age, or the merits of the Reform Bill, that, out of London, one can hardly get rid of an 'oss without more or less doing violence to one's feelin's of integrity. 'The purchaser has needs of a hundred eyes, the seller of but one,' says the authority I quoted before, but dash my vig, they require the seller to make up in tongue what he economises in vision.

"Warrantin' an 'oss is highly inconwenient, 'specially when you've reason to know he's a *screw*, and it requires a good deal

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of management to ewade the question so as not to diminish the price. I generally tries to laugh it off, sayin', 'Vy really warrantin' is quite out of fashion, and never thought of at Tat's;' or if the buyer is a young 'un, and apparently werdant, I says, 'Why, faith, *I* should say he's all right, but you can see the 'oss yourself, and can judge better nor I.'

"Men that have much business of this sort ought to keep a slippery-tongued grum to whom they can refer a purchaser in a hoff-'and sort of way, as though it were beneath their dignity to know nothin' of the kind, and wished the grum to give every possible information, which the warmint knows a great deal better nor do.

"A respectable lookin' grum wot can lie like truth is truly invaluable to gen'lemen of this description. If a man is rich, he may cheat you with impunity; it is only poor men wot suffer in consequence. Honesty is of no use to licensed 'oss dealers. Every man supposes they are rogues and treat them accordingly. Who does not remember old bottle-nosed Richards? When any one axed his number, he said, 'Oh, you ax any shop-keeper in Hoxford Street where the biggest rogue lives, and he'll be sure to send you to me!'

"But to the warranty, as I said before, it's werry inconvenient warrantin', and if a customer sticks to his point, it is not a bad dodge to try and puzzle him by makin' him explain wot *he* means by a sound 'oss, and if he gets any way near the point, ax him if he can lay his 'and on his 'art, and say that he is not only sound but free from all impendin' disease. I once frightened a chap uncommon when we got this far, by exclaimin', 'I'm dashed if there ain't a hectic flush on your mug at this moment that looks werry like consumption.' He closed the bargain immediately, and under pretence of writin' a cheque, went into the 'ouse and had a good look at himself in the glass. Tat is werry clever at this work, and when a Johnny-raw axes him if he warrants an 'oss sound, he exclaims with a hair of astonishment, '*Warrant him sound!* Why, sir, I wouldn't *warrant* that he's an 'oss, let alone that he's sound'—haw! haw! haw! My friend Dickey Grunt, who lisps werry

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much, did a clever thing in this line t'other day. He sold an uncommon green'orn a broken-winded 'oss, *lithping* out when ax'd if he warranted him sound, 'Oh in courthe like all men I w-a-a-n-t him thound;' whereupon the youth paid the money and dispersed for a ride. Presently he comes back with a werry long wissage, and said, 'Vy, sir, this 'ere 'oss is broken-winded.'

" 'I knows it,' replies Dick, with the greatest effrontery.

" 'Then, sir, you must take him back and return me my swag, for you warranted him sound.'

" 'No thuch thing, my good fellow,' replied Dick, 'you mithtook me altogether; I thaïd I *wanted* him thound! not that I warranted him thound.' (Loud laughter.)

" Old Joe Smith in Chiswell Street had a vicious nag wot would neither ride, nor drive, nor 'unt, nor do anything that a nag ought. Well, Joe took him to Barnet fair, where he fell in with a swaggerin' chap in tight nankeens and hessians, who axed him in a hoff'-and sort of way, if he knowed of anything that would knock his buggy about, to which Joe conscientiously replied he did, and sold him his 'oss. Having got the tin, Joe left the town, for Barnet is only a dull place of recreation, when what should come past him like a flash of lightenin', but his old nag, with his 'ead i' the hair, kickin' and millin' the splash-board of a tidy yellow buggy, with a cane back, and red wheels picked out with green. Presently, up came the owner on a grey poster, with the traces all danglin' at his 'eels, and jist as he neared Joe, the old nag charged the rails of the new mound, snappin' the jimmy shafts like carrots, and leavin' the rest of the buggy scattered all over the road.

" 'Hooi, you rogue! you willain! you waggabone!' roared the buyer, gaspin' with rage and fatigue, 'I'll teach you to sell sich 'nags to family men of fortin'! You've all but been the death of Mrs. and Miss Jiggins and myself—Where do you live, you complicated abomination of a scoundrel?'

" Now Joe, who is a hoiley little chap, cunnin' as the devil, and not easily put out of his way, 'special ven it's his interest not to be so, let Jug run on till he was fairly blown, when he

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werry coolly observed, jinglin' the odd pewter in his breeches pocket, 'My dear sir, you are labourin' under a werry considerable mistake. If you call to mind what you axed me, it was, if I knowed an 'oss to *knock* your buggy about, and egad! if he hasn't done it to the letter (pointin' to the remnants on the road), I don't know what knockin' about is.'

"Haw! haw! haw!" laughed Mr. Jorrocks, a chuckle in which the majority of the company joined.

"Another chap that I know had an 'oss that was a capital 'unter, and good at everything but 'arness, which his soul disdained. Well, it didn't suit the owner's convenience to keep anything but what the lawyers call *qui tam* 'osses, that is to say, 'osses wot will ride as well as drive; so he looked out for a customer, and presently found a softish sort of chap in green spectacles, and a shiny wite 'at, who having tried him to ride axed if he was quiet in 'arness. To this the owner had no hesitation in sayin' yes, for he had seen the nag standin' in 'arness without movin' a muscle, but when the buyer wanted to tack a carriage to the 'arness—Oh, my eyes! that was quite a different story; and my lord rebelled, and kicked the *woiture* to bits. The buyer tried to return him, but the owner convinced him he was wrong, at least he convinced him he would not take him back, which was pretty nearly the same thing.

"Daddy Higgins in Rupert Street had just such an 'oss as Joe Smith's—one of the reg'lar good-for-nothin's—and sold him to a Quaker to draw his cruelty-wan, assurin' him, when axed if he was quiet in harness, that it would delight Hobadiah's eyes to see him draw. Well, the Quaker tried to tackle him, but the 'oss soon sent his 'eels through the splash-board, and when Hobadiah remonstrated, all the Daddy did was to laugh, and assure him it would delight *his* eyes to see him draw, for the 'oss would never bear a pair of shafts in his life.

"But enough of sellin'—It's time I was sayin' somethin' about buyin'—No easy matter either.

"Speakin' of his time, Gambado said it was immaterial whether a purchaser went to Tattersall's, or Haldridge's, or Meynell's 'unt, or to his Majesty's, for it was probable he would

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be taken in wherever he went, and things are pretty much in the same state now.

“The less a man knows about an ’oss, the more he expects, and the greater the probability of his thinkin’ himself *done*. Oh, my beloved ’earers, ’appy is the day, when brimful of hignorance, the tyro enters on his first ’oss dealin’ speckilation—Great may be his greenness, but age and experience will cure all that, and who would not barter grey-’eaded gumption for the joyousness of youthful confidence and indiscretion? for that pure werdancy, wot sends ingenuous youth up back-slums in search of ’osses advertisin’ for kind masters rather than high prices, the property of noblemen deceased, or officers goin’ abroad. (Applause.)

“When I was a *bouy*, clods came to London expectin’ to find it paved with gold, and many wot read the newspaper adwer-tisements, must think it’s the real place for humanity and ’oss flesh—sich shape—sich symmetry—sich action—sich temper, the most timid may ride, and sich bargains! Who would trudge, when for twenty pounds he can have a cob fit to carry a castle, or a canterin’ thorough-bred, that a child may ride. The werry trials they hoffer would keep a man goin’, *provided* he could but *get them*.

“No man fit to be at large will ever trouble a puff advertisement. If he does, he will find himself saddled with an ’oss that isn’t worth his saddle, or may be, taken to a police office for stealin’ of him. Next, let him avoid choppin’ and changin’. We know what we have, but we don’t know what we may get, is a werry treasurable truism.

“Whatever may be the risks of out-and-out dealin’, there is no doubt out exchangin’ is by far the most certain loss; and it is one of those provokin’ uncertain certainties, for a man is never certain wot he loses. ‘If he don’t suit, I’ll take him back,’ says a dealer; no doubt he will, but will he return you the tin? No such thing! He’ll give you somethin’ worse, and make you give him somethin’ for doin’ so, and the oftener you change, the worse you’ll be mounted.

“There’s an old sayin’ that it’s easier to perceive the wrong

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than pursue the right; and I reckon it's a vast easier to tell a man wot he should not buy than wot he should. Walk along Piccadilly any summer afternoon, and see the seedy screws shakin' on the cab-stands; there is age, wice, and infirmity, unaided by blisters or bran mashies. Flesh covers a multitude of sins, but cabby stands forth in the familiar anatomy of high bones, and yet there be good shapes and good pints to admire, but no one would think of buyin' a cab 'oss! Still there is much good avoidance to be learned by lookin' them over.

"'Who wants to buy an 'oss, wot can walk five, and trot twenty miles an hour?' exclaimed a wag among the crowd before the bettin' room at Doncaster. 'I do!' 'I do!' 'I do!' replied a dozen voices. 'Then if I hears of sich a one, I'll let *you* know,' replied the gentleman; and werry similar is my sitivation with regard to adwisin' you where to purchase. One thing is quite certain, that you can't buy experience with another man's money, but then, havin' to pay for it, he will do best wot gets it for least.

"The first step towards a purchase is to make up your mind what sort of an 'oss you want; 'unter, 'ackney, charger, coach, or 'qui tamer.' This is a most important point, especial where you go to a dealer's, where they never have less than thirty or forty, and as many more comin' from 'Orncastle or 'Owden, or at their farms in the country. For want of this previous arrangement I once saw a rum scene between Septimus Green, old Verd Antique's ninth son, and Tommy Doem, wot kept the Pelican Livery and Bait Stables in Cripplegate. Old Tommy was on the eve of his perihodical bankruptcy, and jest afore shuttin' up Septimus arrived flourishin' his cambric, with his white jeans strapped under his chammy leather opera boots, and a tartan Joinville across his neck. Old Tom eyed him as he swaggered down the ride, and having exchanged nods Septimus began axin' Tommy if he had anything in his line, jest as though he bought an 'oss every other day. Tommy paused and considered, runnin' his mind's eye, as it were, through the seven stalls, and the ten stalls, and the fifteen stalls, and all the loose boxes, and then as usual he



"BUT I DOESN'T VONT A COW!"

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called for Joe. Joe was the pictur of a dealer's man; red nose, blear eyes, long body, short legs—and master and man were one. After a little side talk, in the course of which Tommy heard with regret that the brown was at Greenwich, and the roan at Dulwich, and the white at Blackheath, and half a dozen others of Green's cut away on trial, Tommy exclaimed with a hair of sudden enlightenment, 'But, Joe, there's the cow! Jest slip on the 'altar, and bring her hup the ride.'

"'Cow!' exclaimed Septimus, 'I wants an 'oss!'

"'Well, but *see her out* at all ewents,' replied Tommy in the sweetest manner possible; 'lookin' costs nothin',' added he.

"'But I doesn't vont a cow!' roared Septimus, bustin' with rage.

"Jest then the street gates closed, and hup came Joe, runnin' the cow as he would an 'oss, old Tommy praising her haction and the way she lifted her leg, swearing she never would come down, takin' no notice of Green stormin' and swearin' he didn't want a cow, he wouldn't take a cow in a gift; and I really believe if I hadn't been there old Tommy would have talked him into it—for he certain*lie* had the most buttery tongue that ever was hung—and the gates were locked into the bargain.

"But let us narrow the field of 'oss speckilation, and view our buyer on the road to a dealer's in search of an 'unter. No man should go there in black silk stockin's; dress trousers are also out of character. And here I may observe that there be two sorts of fox-'unters—the quiet fox-'unter wot goes out werry swell, but comes home and resumes the appearance of a gemman, and the Tom-and-Jerry fox-'unter wot goes out now and then to smoke cigars, pick up a steeple-chaser, wear groomish clothes, and be able to talk of the 'ounds. The latter are not the men for the dealer's money. They turn the stables over from end to end, worm out the secrets, and keep a register of the fluctuations in price of each 'oss. Some act as middle-men between the buyer and seller, gettin' wot they can out of each for their trouble. 'I can buy him cheaper than you,' they say, and so they benefit the buyer by pocketin' the difference. These are the bouys to bother

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a dealer's vig! A vink from them stops many a bargain, while an approvin' nod from such distinguished judges drives ingenuous youth into extempore bargains that they would otherwise bring half their acquaintance to inspect.

"When three men enter a yard a dealer seldom opens out. Two are plenty for business—if the buyer is *pea-green*, he had better get some riper friend to play first fiddle, and he must be spectator. If he has a button at his 'at and 'olds his tongue, he may pass for a quiet fox-'unter, and so command respect. There's 'masonry' in fox-'unting, and a loop in at the linin', or a button behind, will do more than all the swagger and bluster in the world.

"It is an invariable rule with the dealers to praise the bad points and let the good 'uns speak for themselves. It is a waste of time observin' that an 'oss is large in the 'ead or light in the carcase, 'cause a contradiction is sure to follow. It is equally useless axin' the age of a dealer's 'oss, because they are all 'six h'off.' If you object to shape, make, or colour, they will tell you it's all fancy! that some folks like a happle, others a honion, and Lord So-and-So would give any price for sich an 'oss. As to hargufying with a dealer, that's quite out of the question, because he has his cut and dried answers to every obseruation you can make, and two or three grums to swear to what he says. Keep, therefore, in mind what Gambado said about being *done*, keep also in view the sort of nag you want, and don't be talked into buyin' a cow, and when an 'oss of your figure makes his appearance, look him full in the face as though you were used to such interviews. If you have read about sand-cracks, and sallenders, and sit-fasts, and thorough-pins, and quitters, and locked jaws, and curbs, you will save yourself the trouble of inquiren' after any of them by axin' the dealer if he'll warrant him sound. In course he'll say yes, and you may then proceed with your view. The precept 'No fut, no 'oss,' is well to be borne in mind perhaps, as also 'No 'ock, no 'unter.' Now 'ark forward!

"The dealer, what with his tongue and his whip, will keep you and the nag in a state of trepidation.

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"All the good qualities 'oss flesh is heir to will be laid to his charge, and there will be nothin' you can ax but what he will be able to do—'Leap, Lor' bless you, sir, I wish you'd seed him last Friday gone a week with the Queen's staggers at Slough. We was a-runnin' old Skylark, wot always goes straight, when he planted the field at a six foot vall, dashed and coped with broken bottles—not another 'oss looked at it, and Davis declared he never seed such a lip in his life.'

"*Spooney*.—'Vill he go in 'arness, do you think?'

"*Dealer*.—'Quietest crittur alive! Jack's eldest bouy here, a lad o' thirteen, driv him and another to Mile End and back, 'long the Strand, through Fleet Street, Cheapside, and all, busiest time o' day, and he nouter looked to the right nor the left. Lay your leg over him, sir!'

"Now this latter is an invitation for the gen'leman to mount, and if so be he of the button has never been much used to ride, he had better let his friend use his leg, or should neither be werry expert, let the dealer's man throw his over. Some 'osses don't like strangers, and nothin' looks so foolish as a man floored in a dealer's yard. Still mountin' is the first step in practical 'ossmanship, and it don't need no conjuror to know that unless a man mount he can have no ride. Should our friend think well of the nag's looks, perhaps he cannot begin his acquaintance too soon. If he sees no wite of the eye or symptoms of wice, no coixin' or whooin', or shoulderin' to get him to stand, let him march boldly up and mount, like William the Conqueror. 'Osses are queer critturs, and know when we are frightened of them just as well as we do ourselves. Born to be controlled, they stoop to the forward and the bold!

"If Green'orn gets fairly up, the chances are he likes his mount. It is pleasant to find one's self carried instead of kicked off, and some 'osses never ride so well as on trial. Out then Spooney goes and tries all his paces; a self-satisfied smile plays on his mug as, rein on neck, he returns down the covered ride, and the dealer, with a hair of indifference, axes 'Ow he likes him?'

"*Spooney*.—'Why, pretty well—but I think he *ray*-ther pulls—I fear he'll be vindictive with 'ounds.'

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“*Dealer.*—‘*Pulls!* Vy, if you *pulls* at him, in all humane probability he’ll *pull* at you—otherwise you might ride him with a thread,’ addin’ aside, ‘I sells ’osses, not ’ands. Finest mouth’d nag I ever was on!’

“*Spooney.*—‘Well, but you’ll take a *lee-tle* less than what you ax?’

“*Dealer.*—‘Couldn’t take a fardin’ less!—gave within three sovs. of that myself, and brought him all the vay from ’Orncastle—Squire Smith will take him if you don’t—indeed, here comes his grum.’

“Here the dealer’s liveried and booted servant appears.

“The bargain is then closed, the money paid, a warranty included in the stamped receipt, and Spooney’s first ride is to Field’s, or the Weterinary College, to have him examined. One pound one is thus added to his price.

“Thus, my beloved ’earers,” concluded Mr. Jorrocks, “have I conducted you through the all-perilous journey of your first deal, showin’ how warious and conflictin’ are the opinions relative to ’osses, and how, as in many cases, wot is one man’s meat is anither man’s puzzon. Far be it from me to say that you’ll be much wizer from anything you have heard, for the old stager will find nothin’ but what he knew before, while all that can be taught the beginner is not to be too sanguinary in his expectations.

“‘Turn about is fair play,’ as the devil said to the smoke-jack, and it is only right that those wot have invested capital in the purchase of experience, should be allowed to get a little back. By-and-by it will be Green’orn’s turn, and then little Spooney, who now goes sneakin’ up the yard, will swagger boldly in, commandin’ the respect and attention of the world.

“We must all creep afore we can walk, and all be bitten afore we can bite. But let not ingenuous youth despair! If his ’oss is not so good as he might be, let him cherish the reflection that he might have been far worse! Let him apply that moral precept so beautifully inculcated towards his better ’alf—

“‘Be to his faults a little blind,
Be to his wirtues ever kind.’

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“So shall little Spooney jog on rejoicin’! Each succeedin’ year shall find him better mounted, and at each fresh deal, he will become a wiser, and, I ’opes, an ’appier man.”

Mr. Jorrocks concluded amidst loud and universal applause.

A loud call being then made on Roger Swizzle, that genius at length stepped forward, and after a few preparatory hems, declared that “of all the lectures he had ever listened to, either at Guy’s, Bartholomew’s, or elsewhere, he had never heard one so replete with eloquence, genius, and genuine information. (Cheers.) Hunting, and Handley Cross waters (“The original Spa!” some one cried out), the original Spa, of course,” repeated Roger, “would cure every complaint under the sun, and if he hadn’t such a wash-ball seat, he declared he’d turn sportsman himself. Before they dispersed, however, let them pay a tribute of respect to the gentleman to whom they were indebted for such a great sporting luminary—he proposed three cheers or Captain Doleful.”

Captain Doleful returned thanks, and proposed three cheers for Roger Swizzle, after which the majority of the male portion of the meeting resolved themselves into a brandy-and-water committee (Jorrocks in the chair), which sat very late, and resulted in our friend being left to pay the greater share of the shot.



Mr. Jorrocks's Supporters.

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CHAPTER XIX.

HUNTSMAN WANTED.

WANTED IMMEDIATELY, for the HANDLEY CROSS FOXHOUNDS, a strong, active, bold, enterprising young man, in the above capacity. He must be desperately fond of hunting, and indefatigable in the pursuit of it. He must be shrewd, sensible, good-tempered, and sober; exact, civil, and cleanly; a good horseman, and a good groom; his voice must be strong, clear, and musical; and his eye so quick, as to perceive which of his hounds carries the scent when all are running; and he must have so excellent an ear as always to distinguish the foremost hounds when he does not see them. He must be quiet, patient, and without an atom of conceit. Address (post paid), stating full particulars as to age, size, weight, previous service, &c., to M. F. H. JOHN JORROCKS, Diana Lodge, Handley Cross Spa.



SUCH was the special advertisement that our friend Mr. Jorrocks, with the aid of the editor, drew up for insertion in that gossiping publication the "Handley Cross Paul Pry," from whence it was copied into the "Post," and the London sporting papers generally, producing an immense sensation in the world of servitude.

People whose establishments are regulated with such regard to laziness, that John knows whether it is his business to brush his master's hat, or James's, can have little idea how those in middle life get served at all, or yet the sort of servants that offer themselves for any situation that may be vacant.

Thus, great Herculean ploughmen will offer themselves as postillions, and, failing that, will consider themselves equally

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fit for butlers; while fellows that have never been in a stable will undertake the charge of horses and carriages, and drive if required.

The above striking advertisement soon caused Diana Lodge to be besieged by all the idle, dog-stealing ruffs in the country—flash, slangy-looking scamps in long waistcoats, greasy livery coats with covered buttons, baggy breeches, and square-toed gaiters, buttoning in front of the knee. They all spoke in the highest terms of themselves, and though none of them had ever hunted, they all thought they'd "like it," and one had actually got so far in a hunting establishment as to have been what he called second pad groom—viz., a helper at twelve shillings a week. The following sample will show the general character of the correspondence:—

"EDGEBASTON.

"SIR,

"I am in whant of a situation, Seeing your advertsmnt in the Life papey If a greable to you it whould sute me verrey well I have not been in survice be fore I have been A Horse Dealer for my self and with my Father But I have no doubt that I am compident to take the situation for I been used to hunting all my life and have rode in sum of the furst Steeple Chases in the country I can refure you to John Cock's Esq. Cocks' Hall, near Beccles. I have been yoused to hunt with many fine hounds—Stag Hounds, Beagles, and all, and know all about them. I am maried but no famley, onley my self and wife. I am 28 years of age 10 stone wight But as for wage I shall leave for you to state if every other thing meets your approbation I have a friend that is Butler with Captain Boxer, at Bath, you can right to him if you think proper As E knows my self and famely,

"I remain

"Yours

"Obdiant

"Servant

"THOMAS LOGGAN.

"To JOHN JORROCKS, ESQ.,
"Of the Handley Cross Hunt,
"HANDLEY CROSS."

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"WARMINSTER.

"SIR,

"On hearing you want a huntsman, I take the liberty of writing to enquire after the place I thoroly understand my business either as groom or coachman and have been accustomed with hounds I live at present with John Jones Esq. at Warminster as groom and gardner where I leave on Thursday first if you want a servant I shall be glad to serve you as I am a married man.

"Your obedient servant,

"JOHN CRAKETHORPE.

"To MR. JORROCKS, ESQ.,
"HANDLEY CROSS"

"DEAR SIR,

"I take the liberty of writing those Few Lines to you Hereing that you are In Want of A Servant And I Am in Want of A Situation If you Have No Objections And I have Been in the Racing Stables Seven Years And My Age is 23 And Stands About 65 foot 6½ And My Wages Will be 30£ A Year And If you thought I Should Suit You Direct to Mark Spraggon, North-fleet And for My Caracter Inquire of Major Barns of Horton Hall Near York And My Weight is A bout 9 stone. I am disengaged in the woman way.

"Your humble Servant,

"MARK PUNCHEON.

"To J. JORROCKS, ESQ.,
"Fox Hunter,
"HANDLEY CROSS."

"SIR,

"I saw in your advertisement wanted, a single young man as huntsman with a tow days a-week pack of hounds, I should like to know what the celery will be, as I think I could fulfill this situation very well, my weight is 9½ stones, Please to write with return of Post about the Celery and where the situation is, You will much Oblige

"I remain your

"humble Servant,

"JOHN GREEN.

"MR JORROCKS, M.F.H."

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“SIR,

“I write these few lines to inform you that I have seen in the Field paper that you are in want of a young man as huntsman to your hounds and I have sent these few lines to say I am a marred man and has a family but I cannot move my Wife for 4 years to come for I have 8 Boys at trade and they get their meat and lodge at home so if you do not get one to suet you I should be happy to wait on you if you think that I will suet you I have been with boath fox Hounds and Harriers to take care of them in the Kennels and Hunting them in the field and I can Groom my own Horses to which I like to take Car of my own Horses allways as for my Age is 52 years and my Weight is 9 stone and has been 5 years in my last sittuation but I do not wish to give you the trouble to write back if you get one to suet you for I can be at liberty in a Week's Notice, so if you think I will suet you my wages is one Pound per Week and meat in the House likewise, and Close to hunt in so I remain

“Your humble Servant,

“JOHN COX.

“Please to Direct to

“Mr. JOHN COX,

“(*Huntsman*)

“Epsom.

“To MR. JOHN JORROCKS,

“*Master of Hounds,*

HANDLEY CROSS.”

Finding the applications by letter becoming numerous, Mr. Jorrocks soon discontinued answering those which he did not think held out any prospect of suiting, but the following from the well-known Dick Bragg roused his bile into the answer that succeeds :—

“DEAR SIR,

“Seeing that you are in wants of an energetic gent to hunt your hounds, I beg to represent my qualifications for the appointment. I've held office Sir in some first rate administrations, yes Sir, in some first rate administrations Sir; my Lord Reynards Sir of Turkeypont Park Sir, the Duke of Downeybird of Downeybird Castle Sir, but my precious health not being

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quite adequate to the mental exertion and bodily fatigue consequent on a four or five days a week establishment, I have determined to sink the dignities of life a little in favour of Peace and quietness and should have no objection to negotiate an alliance with you for the management of your hounds and country.

"One thing I should stipulate at starting, namely, that if we do not agree, you will have the kindness not to mention this application as it would cause me to lose caste in the rank of life in which I have heretofore moved.

"That, I feel assured from your high merchantile reputation I may rely upon—Yes Sir, I feel assured from your high merchantile reputation I may rely upon—To proceed then—In course you would allow me to appoint my own whips, an arrangement that I have always found to be most inducive to sport, for none but a huntsman knows whether his whips play properly into his hands or not, and there is nothing like having the power to turn them off for making them to do as they ought. I don't hold with Beckford that a first whip should be a second huntsman. No Sir, no—I say, a whipper-in can be made, but a huntsman's talent must be born with him—I should basely dissemble if I hesitated to declare that in sporting science my abilities shall yield to none. I will hunt a fox with any man—with the great Lord Elcho himself!

"To descend to particulars, however; perhaps you'll allow me to ask what your salary is—also what the draft hounds may be worth yearly per annum, and what you think the vails will come to—Also if I shall be allowed a boy to brush my clothes and clean my boots, as I shouldn't like to have any dirty work to do—A line to the *Corner* will find me, and hoping to establish a mutually advantageous connection, I beg to subscribe myself

"Yours obediently,

"RICHARD BRAGG.

"P.S.—'Quick' should be the word, as such a chance doesn't offer every day.

"To — JORROCKES, ESQ., M.F.H.,

"&C. &C. &C.,

"HANDLEY CROSS."

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Jorrocks was desperately angry when he got this. He grinned with rage when he read it, to think that any one should think he was such a fool as to be taken in by it. At first he was for writing Dick a stiff "M. F. H. John Jorrocks presents his compliments" note, but thinking that would not be sufficient relief to his mind, he turned his attention to an abusive letter calling Dick all sorts of conceited cocktail humbugs, which he sprawled over a sheet of foolscap with his great round schoolboy hand, when it occurred to him that the banter tack would be more telling and mortifying, so after a good deal of consideration he concocted the following:—

"SIR,

"I am werry much obliged by your purlite communication, and much regret that it did not come a little sooner, as I thinks you seem jest the sort of man—I beg pardon—gentleman I want—I doesn't care a dump about money further nor as it enables one to pursue the pleasures o' the chace, and if you'd shown us the first chop sport you propose, I'd ha' given you sich a kick at Christmas as would have sent you right hup into the first class carriage of service, and I makes no doubt my example would have been followed by all the generously disposed cocks of my 'unt. Unfortunately the appointment is filled up, though perhaps 100*l.* a year, and perquisites by fair means or foul—which in course I winks at, to the tune of 50*l.* more—might not have been worth your consideration, though Christmas presents would make the salary up good 200*l.* a year. I does all the dirty work myself, and you might have worn wite kids on non-'unting days.

"Yours to serve,

"JOHN JORROCKS,

"Grocer, Tea Dealer, and M. F. H."

"To MR. RICHARD BRAGG,

"MESSRS. TATTERSALL'S,

"HYDE PARK CORNER,

"LONDON."

"Here's a cove wants you," said Benjamin, as he brought in a candle to seal the foregoing.

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“Vants me?” repeated Mr. Jorrocks. “Who can it be?”

Benjamin.—“Don’t know—von’t tell me—says his name’s Pigg—comes from the north—Scotland, I should think by his tongue.”

Mr. Jorrocks.—“Pigg—*humph*—Scotland—*humph*—Shouldn’t wonder if he’s one of these place-’unting coves—the town’s full of them.—Never saw an advertisement work so.—There,” continued he, as he finished sealing the letter, “take that to the Post, and mind you don’t pick the ’ead off; and here, Binjimin,” continued Jorrocks, “send the Pigg in!”

“Yez-ur,” said Benjamin, taking his departure.

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CHAPTER XX.

JAMES PIGG.



CARCELY had Mr. Jorrocks composed himself in his red morocco audience chair, ere a sledge-hammer sort of blow at the door announced the approach of the stranger.

"COME IN!" roared the M. F. H. in a corresponding tone, and the order being obeyed, our friend had a view of his caller.

He was a tall, spindle-shanked man, inclining to bald, with flowing grey-streaken locks shading a sharp-featured, weather-beaten face, lit up with bright hazel eyes. A drop hung at his nose, and tobacco juice simmered down the deeply-indented furrows of his chin. His dress was a strange mixture of smart-coloured misfitting clothes. A blue-and-white cotton kerchief was twisted carelessly round his scraggy neck—a green-baize jacket, with the back buttons almost between his shoulders, flattened upon a pair of baggy, dirty white cords, between which and a little red waistcoat a vast protuberance of soiled linen appeared—his shrunk, drab mother-of-pearl buttoned gaiters, dragged upon an ill-shaped leg, making his stooping, lathy figure more ungainly, and the scantiness of his upper garments more apparent. His hands, encased in shiny yellow ochre-coloured gloves, were thrust a long way through the little jacket sleeves, between which and the gloves, coarse, dirty wristbands appeared—one hand clutched a boy's turned-up hat, and the other rested on a rugged oak staff.

"*Humph!*" grunted Mr. Jorrocks, as he eyed him, observing



"CANDIED NEWCASSEL."

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aloud to himself, "Vot a long-legged beggar it is," inwardly resolving he wouldn't do.

"Your sarvant, sir," said the figure, shuffling the little hat into the staff hand, while he raised the other to his forehead, and kicked out behind. "Heard tell ye was in wants of a hontsman."

"*Humph!*" grunted Mr. Jorrocks again, "*you* don't look much like one. Vere d'ye come from?"

"Cannynewcassel," replied Pigg. "A, ar's frae Harwich last," added he, "but ar's a native of Paradise, aside Cannynewcassel—ye'll ken Cannynewcassel, nae doubt," observed he, running the words together.

"Carn't say as 'ow I do," replied Mr. Jorrocks thoughtfully, still eyeing the bird of Paradise. "Is it any way near Dundee?"

"Dundee! no—what should put that i' your head?" snapped Pigg.

"Wot should put that i' my head!" retorted Mr. Jorrocks, boiling up. "Vy, it must be near somewhere!"

"Near somewhere!" now exclaimed Pigg, indignant at the slight thus put on his famous city. "Why, it's a great town of itself—ye surely ken Newcassel where arle the coals come frae?"

"You said Candied Newcassel," enunciated Mr. Jorrocks, slowly and emphatically—"You said Candied Newcassel," repeated he, "from which I natterally concluded it was near Dundee, where they make the candied confectionary. I get my marmeylad from there. I'm not such a hignorant hass," continued he, "as not to know where Newcastle is. I've been i' Scotland myself!—Durham at least."

They then took a good long stare at each other, each thinking the other a "rum 'un."

Jorrocks gave tongue first. "Wot 'ounds have you been with?" asked he.

"A, a vast," replied Pigg, "yen way and another."

"Yen way and another," muttered Mr. Jorrocks, still eyeing him intently.

"Aye, ar ken all the hounds amaist. Tyndale, and D'orm, and Horworth, and arl."

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"Ah, but those 'ill be Scotch dogs," observed Mr. Jorrocks, "a country I knows nothin' whatever on—have you been in any civilized country?"

"Aye, civil, aye, they're all civil enough—gin ye're civil to them. If ye set up your gob, they'll mump it, ar's warn'd."

"No—no—that's not what I mean," retorted Mr. Jorrocks, getting angry and shuffling about in his seat. "I wants to know if you've ever been in any of the crack countries?"

"Cracked countries," repeated Pigg thoughtfully, scratching his head—"Cracked countries; aye—yeas—Warlesend."

"No! no!" growled Mr. Jorrocks, kicking out his legs, "any of the cut 'em down and ang 'em up to dry countries?" asked our master, thinking to exterminate Pigg and be done.

"Why—no—ar hannut," drawled Pigg, twiddling his hat about.

"Ah then, you'll not do for me," replied our friend, with a supercilious chuck of the chin.

"Why, why, sir," replied Pigg, "ye ken best."

"Ye ken best," repeated Mr. Jorrocks aloud to himself, adding, "What a rum beggar it is to be sure."

They then kept eyeing each other again for a while.

"*Con-founded nuisance*," muttered Mr. Jorrocks to himself, "not being able to get an 'untsman," recollecting the boiled lobster, plaster of Paris poll-parrot merchant, and other scenes. "*Con-founded nuisance indeed*." Then he thought he'd sound Pigg again.

"Do you *think*, now," continued he, speaking very slowly, and looking very intently at the applicant—"Do you *think*, now you're ekle to my place? first-rate establishment, splendid pack of 'ounds, invaluabe 'osses, swell country, critical field."

"Why, now, it's not for me to say," replied Pigg, turning his quid, "but ar's fond o' hunds, and ar'd de my best te please ye."

"Well," thought Mr. Jorrocks, "that's summut at all events, let me be master, which is agreeable. Wouldn't ha' been so with Mr. Bragg, I guess. You can ride, I s'pose?" observed he, addressing the applicant in a more conciliatory tone.

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Pigg.—"Ride! aye, ar wish ar'd nout else te de."

Mr. Jorrocks.—"And clean an 'oss?"

Pigg.—"Aye, ne doubt,—*grum* him, that's to say."

"You'll be *werry* keen, I s'pose?" said Mr. Jorrocks, brightening as he went.

"Ar's varra hungry, if that's what ye mean," replied Pigg, after a moment's consideration.

"No," said Mr. Jorrocks, "I means, you'll be desperation fond of 'unting."

"Fond o' huntin'! Oh faith is I—there's *nout* like huntin'."

"Dash my vig! so say I," exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks, still brightening up, "so say I! it's the real Daffy's Elixir! The Cordial Balm o' Gilead! The concentrated Essence o' Joy!—Vot weight are you? you're long in the leg," continued Mr. Jorrocks, surveying him from head to foot.

"Ar's lang, but ar's leet," replied Pigg, looking down at his spindle shanks; "ar's sure ar dinna ken what ar weighs—may be elivin stun."

"In course you're a bachelor?" observed Mr. Jorrocks.

"Oh, quite," replied Pigg; "ar niver fashes the women folk."

Mr. Jorrocks.—"Vot's your pedigree? 'Ow are you bred, in fact?"

Pigg.—"A—why—sink"—hesitated the speaker, twisting the hat about hurriedly, "ar dinna ken nout about that. Ar de believe though, gin ar had me dues, ar'd be a gen'leman this day—only ye see, sir, you see," continued he, "mar fore elder John, ye see John Pigg, willed away arle wor brass to the Formory, ye see, and left me wi' fairly nout. Gin ye gan to the Newcassel Formory, ye'll see arle aboot it, in great goud letters, clagged agin the walls. Sink! but he'd better ha' gien me it."

"*Humph*," grunted Mr. Jorrocks, not catching a quarter of this hurried run-together sentence. "*Humph*," repeated he, looking him over attentively, thinking how to get him to speak English. "Wot d'ye say your father was?" at length asked he.

Pigg.—"Ah, ar dinna ken nout about that; ar's heard tell

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ar was dropped somewhere i' Canny Newcassel, but ar niver kenned ne body i' the shape o' father or friend but mar coosin Deavilboger—you'll hav' heard tell of mar coosin Deavilboger, ne doot."

"Can't say as 'ow I have," replied Mr. Jorrocks. "Is he a great man for the 'unt?"

"No, deil a bit," laughed Pigg, "it was just that we fell out about. Says Deavilboger to me yen mornin', as I was gannin' to Gosforth Gates to see the hunds throw off, says he to me, says he, 'If thou doesn't yoke thy cart and gan and lead tormots, thou needn't fash thyself to come back here ony more; ar'll hav' ne gentlemen sportsmen 'bout mar farm.'

"Says ar, to Deavilboger, 'Deavilboger,' says ar, 'thou surely wadn't grudge a man the matter of a hunt, ar that's always i' the way and ready to oblige;' but he's a deuce of a man when he's angered is mar coosin Deavilboger, and he swore and cussed that if ar went ar shouldn't come back—*A, a, a, how he did swear and cuss*—ar really think he didn't leave a part o' me uncussed—'cept my teeth and nails, so ye see we quarrelled and parted ye see.

"But he's a good man i' the main, is mar coosin Deavilboger," continued Pigg, "only he canna bear the hunds, and as sure as iver winter cam round the Deavil an' I were sure to have a dust; but that's all done now and ended, so ar'll always speak well o' the ard Deavil, for he was a good frind to me, and gav' me monny an ard suit o' claes, and monny a half-crown at the Cow Hill and such like times—dare say he gave me this very hat ar hev i' my hand," continued Pigg, thrusting out the little chapeau as he spoke.

"Can you 'unt a pack of 'ounds?" inquired Mr. Jorrocks, wishing to get Pigg on to the old tack.

"Why now, it's not for me to say," replied Pigg, "but ar's used to hunds, and ar's fond o' hunds, and have travelled all o'er the world amaist—Bliss ye, all the sportin' gentlemen ken me, King o' Hungary and all!"

"Well, you shall eat as you're 'ungry," replied Mr. Jorrocks, not catching the last sentence, "but I wants to know more

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about you and your pretensions—an 'untsman holds a conspicuous place in the world's eye, and it be'oves an M. F. H. to be werry 'tickler wot'un a one he selects. Tell me now, can you holloa?"

"Hoop, and holloa, and TALLI-HO!" exclaimed Pigg, at the top of his voice, his eyes sparkling with animation.

"*Gently*," exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks, partaking of his enthusiasm, "you'll frighten the ladies; tell me now, wot wage do you want?"

"What wage? A ar dinne ken!—we'll not differ 'bout the matter o' wage—What is ar to de?"

"Vy, you'll have to 'unt and feed the 'ounds, clean two 'osses, look arter the tackle; see that all's on the square, in fact."

"Ar can de all that," replied Pigg, "and break yeer 'ard bones into the bargain."

"Humph? *Werry kind*," grunted Mr. Jorrocks.

"Ar mean 'ard kennel bones," explained Pigg, seeing Mr. Jorrocks looked irate.

"Oh, I twig," replied our master, resuming his smile, "break 'em for the farmers—for turnip manure, in fact—We'll go on 'bout the wage."

"Ar'd like to have my vittels i' the house, if you have ne objection," resumed Pigg.

"In the 'ouse," said Mr. Jorrocks, considering. "I doesn't know about that—to be sure you are light i' the girth, and don't look like a great grubber, but 'unting makes one werry 'ungry."

"Bless ye, ar eat nout," replied Pigg, rubbing his hand over his stomach, to show how flat it was, "and ar'd take a vast less wage gin ar were fund in the house."

Mr. Jorrocks.—"S'pose, then, we say eighteen pounds, your meat, and a suit of clothes."

Pigg.—"Say twenty, and ar'll find mysel'—ar've a capital cap ar got in a raffle, and a red coat 'ard Sebright gave me."

"No, no," replied Mr. Jorrocks, "none of your cast-offs. The 'Andley Cross 'ounds must be turned out properly."

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"Well, then," replied Pigg, "you mun hev it your own way; see gi' us my arles."

"Your wot?" inquired Mr. Jorrocks.

Pigg.—"My arles! we always get arles i' wor country."

Mr. Jorrocks.—"Wot *all* your wittles at once?"

Pigg.—"No, man—sir, ar mean—summut to bind bargain like."

Mr. Jorrocks.—"I twig! See, there's a shillin' for you. Now go and get your dinner—be werry keen, mind."

Pigg ducked his head as he took the money, and slouched joyfully out of the room.

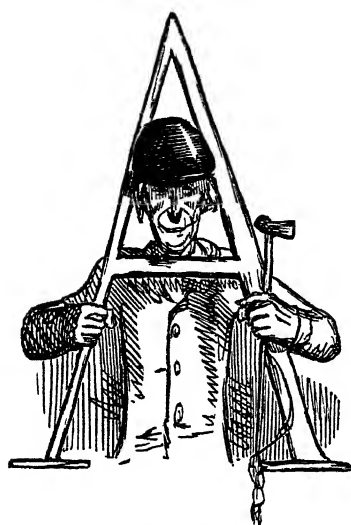
Jorrocks then threw himself back in his red morocco hunting chair, hoping he might answer, and wishing that he hadn't been rather precipitate in the bargain. If Pigg didn't suit, his boots wouldn't fit anybody else. Still he looked more promising than any of the others, and Jorrocks hoped he was keen.

"It might ha' been better, p'r'aps," said he, as he took up a leg to nurse, and entered upon a study of the ceiling—"It might ha' been better if I'd made some inquiries about him—but confound it, wot tradesman can tell anything about an 'untsman, and who else could I ask? Anything's better nor Bin bellowin' 'boiled lobsters' arter one, or the 'ounds runnin' into plaster o' Paris poll-parrot merchants. Con-found it," continued Jorrocks, shaking his head, "Mr. Payne and Goodhall, and these swells i' the cut-me-downs, do the thing so easy, that it makes us fools o' natur think we can do the same, but dash my buttons, findin' a fox and killin' on 'im are werry different things." Then Jorrocks's runaway imagination carried him right into the cut-me-down countries; to Misterton, to Arthingworth, to Bardon Hall with Sir Richard, to Croxton Park with the Belvoir.

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CHAPTER XXI.

A FRIGHTFUL COLLISION! BECKFORD *v.* BEN.



James Pigg.

S our friend fancied himself luxuriating in a run with the Cottesmore from the top of Ranksborough Hill, he was suddenly disturbed by a loud cry of—

“*Murder ! Murder ! Murder ! Here, sir ! Here !*” and Benjamin came bursting into the room with anger and fear depicted in his face, exclaiming, “Please, sir ! here, sir ! that great hugely beast’s taken the shoulder o’ mutton onto his plate, and swears the taters and gravy are good enough for Betsay and me.”

“Taken the shoulder of mutton onto his plate,” repeated Mr. Jorrocks in astonishment ; “impossible, Binjamin ! the man told me he had no appetite at all.”

“Oh but he *has*,” retorted Benjamin with redoubled energy, “and he swears he’ll pick his teeth with the bone, and break my ’ead with it when he’s done—I never see’d such a great hugely beast in all my life.”

“Vell, I’ll go and see arter this,” said Mr. Jorrocks, shaking his head, and buttoning up his breeches pockets, as he rose from his chair with the air of a man determined to show fight.

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"How now!" roared Jorrocks, bursting into the kitchen, to the astonishment of James Pigg, who, knife in hand, was cutting away at the shoulder of mutton to the infinite indignation of Betsey, who seemed about to contend for her share of the prog.

"How now!" repeated Mr. Jorrocks in a still louder voice, which had the effect of making Pigg drop the mutton and jump up from the table.

"Didn't you tell me," said Mr. Jorrocks, speaking very slowly at the commencement, and boiling up as he went on, "Didn't you tell me as 'ow that you hadn't no happetite, and yet I finds you seizing the meat wot's to serve the kitchen for dinner and the parlour for lunch—Vot do you mean by sich haudacity, you great long-legged Scotch sinner?"

"'Ord bliss ye," replied Pigg, "ar was nabbut teasin' yon bit bowdekite," pointing to Benjamin; "mar appetite may be a bit brisker this morn than at most times, for ar had a lang walk, but ar wasn't gannin' to eat all the grub; only that bit bastard wad set up his gob, and say ar was to be in onder him, see ar thought ar'd jist let him see whether or no at startin'."

"Vell, but," replied Mr. Jorrocks, calmly, but firmly, "*fightin' von't do*: I doesn't grudge you the matter o' the mutton, but there must be unanimity and concord, or we shalln't kill no foxes. Binjimin's a fine bouy," continued he, looking at him, "and will fulfil the duties of his station, by which means alone a man can rise to heminence and distinction—*hem!* get fat and rich, werry great things, *hem!*—give satisfaction, and gain unbounded applause, *hem!*—so now jest be'ave and settle yourselves quietly to your dinners, and don't let me have any more nonsense"—saying which, Mr. Jorrocks walked deliberately out of the kitchen, and shut the door loudly upon the party. But though our worthy friend had thus apparently settled the difficulty, he was too good a judge not to see the importance of an early understanding between Pigg and Benjamin as to their relative situations; and, as the latter had to be lowered to the advancement of the former, Mr. Jorrocks had to summon

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all his dexterity to reduce the one without giving a triumph to the other. Not that Ben would have been difficult to replace, or indeed any loss, but Mr. Jorrocks did not like losing all the training he had given him, and which he still flattered himself would work him into a good and cheap servant. Besides, Jorrocks had committed himself to Ben by ordering him another pair of top-boots in lieu of the brown paper ones, and it was hopeless expecting to get another pair of legs that they would fit. Mr. Jorrocks knew the boy too well to suppose that he would easily brook having any one put over him, and the way of doing it occupied our master's thoughts all the afternoon, and through his dinner. As the shades of evening were succeeded by winter's darkness, and Mr. Jorrocks had emptied his third beaker of brandy and water, he stirred his fire and rang for candles.

Benjamin speedily appeared, but, instead of allowing the youth to depart upon bringing the composites, he ordered him to take a chair on the other side of the table, and listen to what he had to say. Mr. Jorrocks then arranged the candles so that one threw a light on the boy and the other on his book, without their being too near the fire to suffer from the heat. Thus prepared, he gave the fire a finishing poke, and clearing his voice with a substantial hem! addressed the boy as follows:—

“Now, Binjimin,” said he, “the ’igh road to fame and to fortin’ is open to you—there is no saying what keenness, combined with sagacity and cleanliness, may accomplish. You have all the ingredients of a great man about you, and hopportunity only is wantin’ to dewelope them.”

“Yez-ir,” said Benjamin, assenting to the proposition.

“You must eschew tip-cat, and marbles, and takin’ backs from bouys i’ the streets,” continued Mr. Jorrocks, “and turn the main-cock o’ your mind entirely on to what Mr. Delmé Radcliffe well calls the Noble Science.”

“Yez-ir,” assented Benjamin again.

Mr. Jorrocks paused, for it was as far as he had arranged matters in his mind, and the answer rather put him out.

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"Now, Binjimin," at length resumed he, opening his book apparently at random as he spoke, "this book is the werry best book wot ever was written, and is worth all other works put together. It is the himmortal Peter Beckford's 'Thoughts upon 'Unting.' 'Thoughts upon 'Unting!'" repeated Mr. Jorrocks, casting up his eyes to the ceiling—"My vig, wot a title! Take any page of the book you like, and it's full of reason and genuine substantial knowledge. See!" said Mr. Jorrocks, "I've opened it at page 268, and how his opinions tally with my own!

"'Hegerness and impetuhosity,' says he, 'are such essential parts of this diversion, that I am never more surprised than when I see a fox-'unter without them.' 'Charmin' idea!" exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks, looking up again at the ceiling. "Dash my vig! how true it is. Whoever heard of a lazy fox-'unter? A man may be late for everything—late to bed, late to breakfast, late to the lord mayor's show—but if he's a real out-and-outer, he'll never be late at the kiver side. Vot, I ax, should be done with a man wot is slack? Wot should be done with a man wot is slack, I axes you, Binjimin?" repeated Mr. Jorrocks, after pausing for an answer.

Benjamin was beat for a reply; but seeing his master's glistening optics fixed upon him, he at length drawled out, "Don't know, I'm sure."

"Don't *know*, you beggar!" responded Mr. Jorrocks, bristling as he spoke. "I'll tell you then, you warmint. He should be 'ung—choked—tucked up short, in fact!"

"Yez-ir," said Benjamin, quite agreeable.

"Now then," continued Mr. Jorrocks, searching in the table of contents for the chapter he wanted, "I wants to tell you wot the great Mr. Beckford says about the vipper-in, and I begs you'll pay 'tikler 'tention to it, for every word deserves to be printed i' letters o' gold, and then, when you understand the duties o' your hoffice, James Pigg and you will go 'and-in-'and together, like the sign of the Mutual Assurance hoffice, and we shall have no more wranglin' about shoulders o' mutton or who's to have the upper 'and.—'Unting is a thing," continued the

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M. F. H., “wot admits of no diwersity of opinion—no diwision of interests. We must be all on one side, like the ‘andle of a tin pot, or like Bridgenorth election. The master, the ‘ounds, and the servants, are one great unity, radiatin’ from a common centre, like the threads of a Bedfordshire bobbin pillow—hem—and all that sort o’ thing—Now,” continued Mr. Jorrocks, turning to the book—“here’s the chapter wot I wonts—No. 9, page one hundred and twenty-two, and again, let me entreat your earnest attention.” Mr. Jorrocks then commenced reading as follows:—

“‘With regard to the vipper-in, he should be attentive and obedient to the ‘untsman;’—attentive and obedient to the ‘untsman, you hear, Binjimin, that is to say, always on the look-out for orders, and ready to obey them—not ‘anging back, shufflin’, and tryin’ to shirk ‘em, but cheerful and willin’; ‘and as his ‘oss,’ says the immortal author, ‘will probably have most to do, the lighter he is the better, though if he be a good ‘ossman the objection of his weight will be sufficiently counterbalanced.’

“Then mark what he says—

“‘He must not be conceited.’—That’s a beautiful idee,” observed Mr. Jorrocks, fixing his eyes on the boy, “and one to which I must ‘eartily say ‘ditto.’

“‘He must *not* be conceited!’ No, indeed he must not, if he’s to serve under me, and wishes to ‘scape the ‘quaintance of my big vip. No conceited beggar will ever do for J. J. ‘I had one formerly,’” continued Mr. Jorrocks, reading on, “‘who, ‘stead of stoppin’ the ‘ounds as he ought, would try to kill a fox by himself.—This fault is unpardonable.’

“Dash my vig if it isn’t,” exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks; “a nasty, dirty, shabby, selfish trick into the bargain.—‘Ow I would trounce a chap wot I caught at that game—I’d teach him to kill foxes by himself. But ‘ark to me again, Binjimin.

“‘He should always maintain to the ‘untsman’s holloa, and stop such ‘ounds as diwide from it.’

“That’s excellent sense and plain English,” observed Mr.



MR. JORROCKS AND HIS WHIPPER-IN.

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Jorrocks, looking at the boy. “‘He should always maintain to the ’untsman’s holloa.’ Do ye ’ear, Binjimin?”

“Yez-ir,” replied the boy.

“‘When stopped, he should get forrard with them, arter the ’untsman.’

“Good sense again,” observed Mr. Jorrocks.

“‘He must always be content to hact a hunder part.’

“Mark those words, Binjimin, and let them be engraved on your mind’s memory.”

“‘He must always be content to hact a hunder part.’”

Mr. Jorrocks then omitted the qualifying sentence that follows, and proceeded in his reading.

“‘You have heard me say, that when there is much riot, I prefer an excellent vipper-in to an excellent ’untsman. The opinion, I believe, is new; I must therefore endeavour to explain it. My meanin’ is this—that I think I should have better sport, and kill more foxes with a moderate ’untsman, and an excellent vipper-in, than with the best of ’untsmen without such an assistant. You will say, perhaps, that a good ’untsman will make a good vipper-in; not such, however, as I mean;—his talent must be born with him.’

“‘His talent must be born with him,’” repeated Mr. Jorrocks, “that is to say, he must have the bump of Fox-un-ta-tiveness werry strongly developed;”—adding to himself, “Wonder if that beggar, Binjimin, has it.” He then resumed his reading.

“‘My reasons are, that good ’ounds (bad I would not keep)’—Nor I, nouthar,” observed Mr. Jorrocks,—“‘oftener need the one than the other; and genius, which in a vipper-in, if attended by obedience, his first requisite, can do no ’urt, in an ’untsman is a dangerous though a desirable quality, and if not accompanied with a large share of prudence, and I may say ’umility, will oftentimes spoil your sport and ’urt your ’ounds. A gen’leman told me that he heard the famous Will Dean, when his ’ounds were runnin’ ’ard in a line with Daventry, from whence they were at that time many miles distant, swear exceedingly at the vipper-in.’

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"A werry improper proceedin' on his part," observed Mr. Jorrocks, without looking off the book.

"'Sayin', "*Wot business have you 'ere?*"—the man was 'mazed at the question—"Why, don't you know," said Dean, "and be bad worded to you, that the great earth at Daventry is open?" The man got forward and reached the earth jest time enough to see the fox go in."

"'Ow provokin'," observed Mr. Jorrocks, "absolutely distressin'—enough to make a Harchbishop swear. Don't know that I ever read anything more 'eart-rendin'. The 'ounds most likely been racin' and tearin' for blood, and then done out on't. Dash my vig, if it hadn't been a main earth I'd ha' dug him!" continued he, thinking the case over.

Presently, a loud snore interrupted our friend, and, looking up, Mr. Jorrocks discovered Benjamin sound asleep, with his head hanging over his left shoulder. Shutting the book in disgust, Jorrocks took a deliberate aim at his whipper-in's head, and discharged the volume with such precision that he knocked the back off the book.

Benjamin then ran roaring out of the room, vowing that Jorrocks had fractured his skull, and that he would "take the law of him" for it.

HANDLEY CROSS.

CHAPTER XXII.

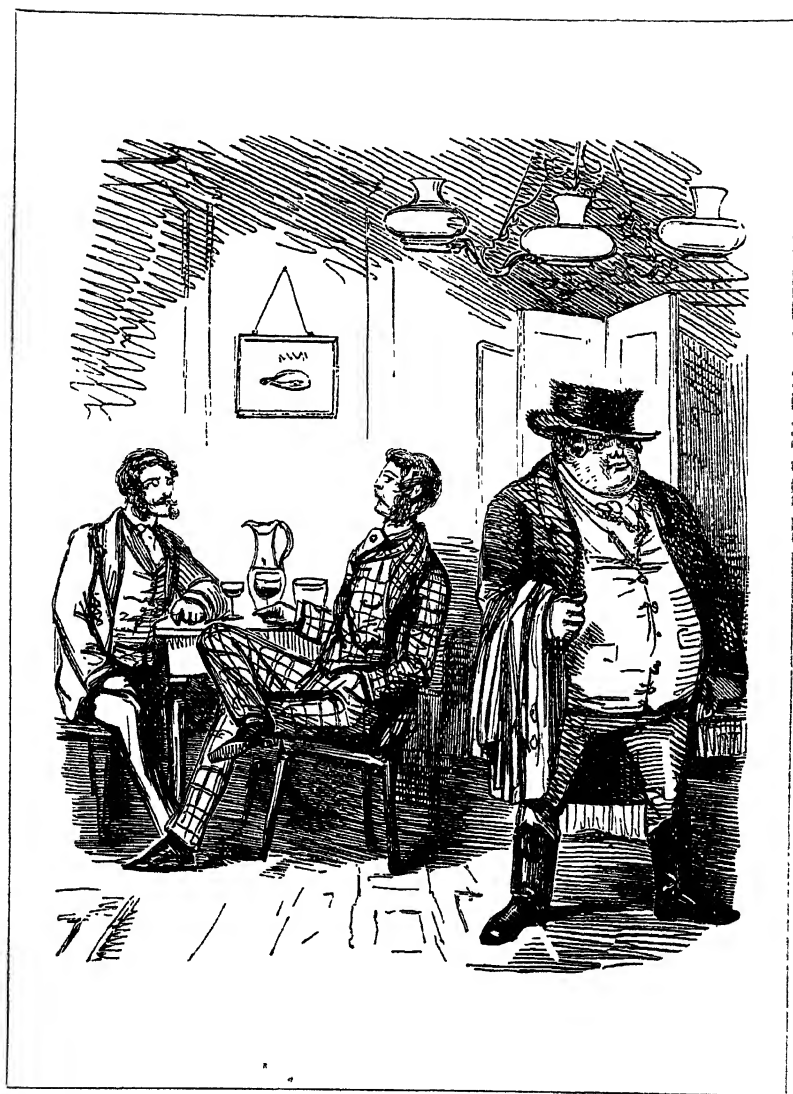
THE CUT-'EM-DOWN CAPTAINS.



HAVING now got a huntsman, and arranged with Duncan Nevin for mounting him until he fell in with screws of his own, Mr. Jorrocks felt if he had business matters arranged in the City, he would be all ready for a start; "business first, and pleasure arterwards," having always been one of his prudential mottoes. Accordingly he slipped down by express train to the Loop-line station, on the Lilywhite and Gravelcoin lines, to meet his traveller (representative as he calls himself) Bugginon, to wet samples, and hear how things were looking in the Lane—and the up-train not fitting cleverly, Mr. Jorrocks repaired to the Imperial Hotel, where, being as an M. F. H. "rayther above the commercials," he turned into the sumptuously furnished coffee-room. There he found a couple of regular cut-'em-down swells, viz., Captain Arthur Crasher, of the Horselydown Hussars, and Captain Blucher Brusher, of the Leatherhead Lancers, carousing after a week's career with Sir Peregrine Cropper's hounds.

Having exchanged their wet hunting things for dry tweeds, and got the week's thorns out of their legs, they had dined and drowned dull care in a couple of bottles of undeniable, Moët-corked, gooseberry champagne, and were now picking their teeth, twiddling their luxuriant moustaches, and stroking their stomachs with the utmost complacency. Mr. Jorrocks's entry rather disturbed them.

"Old boy's made a mistake," whispered the hussar, raising



"OLD BOY'S MADE A MISTAKE."

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his eyebrows, as our creaking-booted friend deposited his reversible coat and writing-case on the side-board—the Captain adding aloud, “What shall we have to dwink?”

“Do us no harm, I des-say,” replied Brusher, staring intently at Jorrocks, adding, “s’pose we say clar’t?”

“Clar’t be it,” rejoined Crasher, ringing the bell, and presently they had a jug of tolerable St. Jullien doing duty for Chateau Margaux. The glasses being large, and the measure thick and highly cut, the men of war were not long in discussing its contents, and a second bottle, with an anchovy toast, presently followed.

The captains then began to talk. They were the crack men of their respective regiments, then quartered at Furloughton, each with an admiring knot of his own, and each with the most sovereign contempt of the other’s prowess. To hear them talk each other over after mess was peculiarly edifying. “Well, what the deuce anybody sees in that Crasher’s equitation, I can’t for the life of me imagine!” Brusher would exclaim amongst his own set; “*Rider!* I really think he’s the very worst rider I ever set eyes on!” Then the hussar would express his opinion of Brusher. “Poor Brusher, poor devil!” Crasher would say, “He *is* without exception the greatest humbug that ever got on a horse—greatest tailor I ever saw in my life.” And so the gallant men turned out each morning full of envy, hatred, and malice, with the fixed determination of cutting each other down, regardless alike of hounds, master, and field. Hark to their conversation!

“Well, I think I never had a better week’s work,” observed Crasher, throwing himself back, in his chair, and eyeing Jorrocks, to see what effect the announcement would have upon him. “Had sixteen falls in five days.”

“Sixteen, have you?” exclaimed Brusher, doubtingly; “I didn’t think you’d had so many. I’ve had fifteen.”

“No, *surely!*” replied Crasher, incredulously.

“Yes I have,” asserted Brusher, confidently—“three on Monday, two on Toosday, four on Thursday, three yesterday, and three to-day.”

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“*Three* to-day!” reiterated Crasher.

“Yes, three,” repeated Brusher.

“Ah, but that’s reckoning the mill reservoir,” observed Crasher.

“Well, surely one’s entitled to reckon the reservoir—was deuced near drowned.”

“Well, but I was in the reservoir too,” observed Crasher, “so that makes me seventeen.”

“But, mark! I was in first,” rejoined Brusher, energetically.

“Ah, but you didn’t take the stiff post and rail with the yawner out of Cricklewood-spiny though,” exclaimed Crasher.

“‘Cause I wasn’t there, my dear fellow!” replied Brusher. “Neither did you take the brook at Waterfield Glen, or the stiff stake and rice-bund on the top of Cranfordheel Hill.”

“Oh! didn’t I, my dear feller! That’s all you know,” sneered Crasher. “I took it just after Tom Stot’s horse all but came back over at it. Help yourself, and let’s dwink fox-hunting,” continued he, filling a bumper and passing the claret-jug to his friend, or his foe, whichever he considered him.

“Ah, fox-’untin’ indeed,” grunted old Jorrocks from behind his “Times” newspaper—“Glad you don’t ’unt with me—should have to insure all my ’ounds’ lives, and my own too, I should think.”

The captains having done honour to the sport that accommodated them with so much jumping, then commenced a more elaborate calculation on their fingers of the number of falls they had each had, in the midst of which they were interrupted by the rushing* of a dark green corduroy-clad porter into the room, exclaiming, *pro bono publico*, “Please gents! the ’bus for the height-fifteen train ’ill be ’ere in ten minnits!” Then, addressing Captain Crasher in a lower tone, he said, “Pleaz zur, your grum wishes to know if you ’ave any horders for ’im afore you goes?”

“Of c-o-o-o-r-s-e I have,” drawled the Captain, pompously napkining his moustache with the greatest coolness, adding—“Send him here.”

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The porter withdrew, and presently a stiffly-built, blue-coated, stripe-vested, drab-gaitered groom entered, and, with a snatch of his forelock, placed himself under the gas-lit chandelier.

The following laconic dialogue then ensued between the Captain and him, the Captain hardly deigning to look at the man, and treating him quite on the word of command principle :—

Captain.—"Hunt Toosday—Hardriding Hill."

Groom (with another snatch at the forelock).—"Yes, sir."

Captain.—"Talavera first—Barrosa second."

Groom (as before).—"Yes, sir."

Captain.—"Or say Barrosa first—Corunna second."

Groom.—"Yes, sir."

Captain.—"Wednesday, Lubberfield Park, Salamanca first—Talavera second."

Groom.—"Yes, sir."

Captain.—"Thursday, Riddlerough, Toulouse first—Badajoz second."

Groom.—"Yes, sir."

Captain.—"Must send on to the Bull at Lushinger."

Groom, lowly and timidly.—"Please, sir, I shall 'ave to trouble you for some money, sir."

"D——n and b——t!" roared the Captain, boiling up furiously. "Didn't I tell you you were only to ask me for money once a month?"

Groom, looking confused.—"Well, sir—but if you don't give me enough to last, sir, what *ham* I to do, sir?"

"*Do!*" roared the Captain, knitting his brows, and eyeing the man as if he would exterminate him. "*Do!* Do as you did before—go to Mr. Castors!" So saying the Captain rose from his seat, and dashing his napkin on the floor, bundled the man neck and crop out of the room.

The other captain quickly followed, peeping over the "Times" as he passed to see whether Jorrocks was laughing, and hurried upstairs, taking three steps at a stride.

Presently the twang of a horn, the rumbling of wheels,

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with the bumping of portmanteaus on the stairs and in the passage, announced the coming of the 'bus, and then the sound of hurrying footsteps was followed by "R-e-e-it!" and the bang of a door outside, when the renewed thunder of wheels announced that the cut - 'em - down captains were gone.

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CHAPTER XXIII.

THE CUT-'EM-DOWN CAPTAIN'S GROOM.



“GOT a rummish customer there, I guess,” observed Mr. Jorrocks, as the groom now re-entered the room to pick up the waifs and strays.

“Hev that,” replied the groom, grinning, and pocketing a pair of dogskin gloves and a cigar-case his master had left on the mantelpiece. The groom then made a dash at the nearly emptied claret jug.

“Ah, that ’ill do ye no good, my frind,” observed Mr. Jorrocks; “that ’ill do ye no good. See,” continued he, “’ere’s a shillin’ for ye—get yourself a glass o’ summut warm and comfortable—that ’ill werry likely give you the cholera.”

“Thank ’e, sir,” replied the man, taking and pocketing the money.

“Are you a-stoppin’ ’ere?” asked Mr. Jorrocks, who had now arranged himself with a coat-lap over each arm before the fire.

“I ham,” replied the man, with a knowing leer, adding—“cause why?—*I can’t get away.*”

“’Deed,” smiled Mr. Jorrocks. “Wot, you’re i’ Short’s Gardens, are ye?” whispered he.

“Just so,” nodded the man. “Hup the spout,” jerking upwards with his thumb.

“I thought he looked like a fast ’un,” rejoined Mr. Jorrocks.

“They’ll be ’avin’ ’im *fast* afore long, I’m a-thinkin’,” observed the groom. “Mr. Castor ’ere has wot he calls a lion on his ’osses for I don’t know ’ow much.”

“Wot, you’re standin’ ’ere, are ye?” asked Mr. Jorrocks.

“Yes, and ’ave been these six weeks, at sixpence a quartern for whoats and all other things in like proportion.”



MR. JORROCKS PUMPING THE CAPTAIN'S GROOM.

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"*In-deed!*" ejaculated Mr. Jorrocks, thinking he wouldn't like to keep horses on those terms. "Well," continued he, thinking it might lead to something, "'ave ye aught good for anything?"

"They're not bad 'osses, none on them," replied the groom; "all past mark o' mouth and all done work, but they can go."

"Can they?" said Mr. Jorrocks, wondering if they would carry Pigg.

"I assure you they can," responded the groom confidently.

"Carry weight?" asked Mr. Jorrocks in an off-hand sort of way.

"Why, I doesn't know that they'd carry *you*," smiled the man, eyeing our friend's substantial form; "but they'd carry anything i' moderation."

"Oh, it's not for myself," retorted Mr. Jorrocks, with a frown and a toss of the head. "I'm a commercial gent, an *£ s. d.* man, not one o' your cut-across country chaps; only, if I could pick up a thing cheap that would ride and go in 'arness 'casionally, I wouldn't mind a trifle. But I'm not a figurante—not a three figur' man at all," added he—"far from it—keeps no cats wot don't catch mice."

"Well, either of ours will go in 'arness," replied the groom.

"Vot! 'ave you only two!" exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks. "Why the man talked as if he 'ad twenty."

"Only two to call our own—our habbsolute own," explained the man. "The rest are jobs—twelve guineas per lunar month, and precious 'ard times they 'ave of it, *I* can tell ye. He *does* knock 'em about, I assure you."

Just then Castors, the landlord, came to say that Mr. Bugginson had arrived, and availing himself of the introduction, Mr. Jorrocks sought an opportunity, after he got matters arranged with his traveller, for having a little conversation with Castors, beginning on indifferent subjects, and drawing gradually up to the Captain, when, finding the groom's statement pretty well confirmed, Mr. Jorrocks slipped with Castors into the stable to have a look at the nags. Amidst the heaps of clothes and straw in which they were enveloped, our master found pretty good though abused legs and big hocks, and after

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observing that he'd "seen wuss 'osses," he quietly withdrew arm-in-arm with the landlord.

"You see," said Jorrocks, in an undertone, "I'm only a tradesman—a Post Office Directory, not a Peerage man—and I doesn't give extravagant, out o' the way prices for nothin'—least of all for 'osses, but if it so 'appens as you 'spects, that these quads o' the Captin's come to grief, why, I wouldn't mind takin' of them at a low moderate figur'—twenty, or five-and-twenty pund, p'r'aps—or may be hup to thirty—jest 'cordin' as they looked out o' doors by daylight, sooner nor they should be degraded i' the 'bus or get into an old 'ooman's cruelty-wan."

"Just so, sir," replied Castors, thinking it well to have a customer in view.

"As to their 'untin' qualities," continued Mr. Jorrocks, with a pshaw and a pish, "I doesn't look at 'em at all i' that light. It's no commendation to a man wot wants an 'oss for his chay to be hofferred one that can jump hover the moon."

"Certainly not," replied Castors, who sat a horse with firmness, ease, and grace, until he began to move, when he generally tumbled off.

"So," continued Jorrocks, "if you find yourself in a fix, you know where to send to," our friend diving into his pocket as he spoke, and fishing out an enormous steel-clasped, purple-backed bill-case, from whence he selected one of his City cards—

JORROCKS & CO.,

Grocers and Tea Dealers.

ST. BOTOLPH S LANE.

and presented it to Castors, who received it with a bow. They then passed by a side-door into the bar, where successive beakers of brandy and water beguiled the time and caused Mr. Jorrocks to be very late, or rather very early (past three A.M.) in getting back to Handley Cross.

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CHAPTER XXIV.

BELINDA'S BEAU.



S Mr. Jorrocks sat at a late breakfast—his wigless aching head enveloped in a damp towel—the pawing of a horse at the trellised archway of Diana Lodge caused him to look up from his well-spread table to reconnoitre the movement.

“Dash my vig, if here bain’t Stobbs!” exclaimed he, jumping up in ecstasy, and bolting his bottom piece of muffin.

“Stobbs!” exclaimed Mrs. Jorrocks, rushing to the eagle-topped mirror.

“Stobbs!” ejaculated Belinda, almost involuntarily, with a blush and a smile, and Jorrocks ran foul of Betsey in the passage, as she came to announce that “Mr. Stobbs was at the gate.”

Charley Stobbs was just four-and-twenty—handsome, lively, and gay, he was welcome wherever he went. In height he was just five feet ten, full-limbed, but not coarse, with a cleanness of make and shape that bespoke strength and muscular activity. His dark brown hair clustered in unstudied locks upon a lofty forehead, while bright brown eyes beamed through the long fringes, giving life and animation to an open intelligent countenance.

Charles was the only son of a rich Yorkshire yeoman—of a man who, clinging to the style of his ancestors, called himself gentleman instead of esquire—Gentlemen they had been styled for many generations, and son had succeeded sire without wishing for a change.

The old lattice-windowed manor-house, substantial and



A WELCOME ARRIVAL.

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stone-roofed, stood amid lofty oaks, upon a gentle eminence above the bend of a rapid river—myriads of rooks nestled in the branches, and the rich meadows around were studded with gigantic oaks and venerable weather-beaten firs. The finest flocks and herds grazed in the pastures, ducks were on the pond, pigs and geese revelled in the stubbles, while the spacious yard at the back of the house contained Dorking fowls, the finest turkeys, and the best of cows. Old Stobbs was, in short, a gentleman farmer. His wife had been dead some years, and Charles and a daughter were the only ties that bound him to the world.

The laudable desire of seeing one's son better than oneself induced old Stobbs to give Charles a good education—not that he sent him to college, but he placed him at a good Yorkshire school, which, just as he was leaving, and the old gentleman was wondering "what to make of him," he happened, while serving at York assizes, to be struck with the easy eloquence or "grand tongue," as the country people call it, of a neighbour's son, whom he remembered a most unpromising boy, that he determined to see if Charles would not train from the saddle and gun and make a grand-tongued barrister too.

Having ascertained the line of study that gentleman had pursued, in due course old Stobbs and his son started for London, and after a week's sight-seeing, during which they each had their pockets picked half a dozen times while staring into shop windows, they found themselves one fine morning at the chambers of the great Mr. Twister, in Lincoln's Inn Square.

Mr. Twister was one of those legal nuisances called conveyancers, whom it is to be hoped some contrivance will be found to extinguish, and he could find a loophole for an unwilling purchaser to creep out at in the very best of titles. Having plenty to do himself, he took as many pupils as ever he could get to help each other to do nothing. Each of these paid him a hundred guineas a year, in return for which they had the run of a dingy, carpetless room, the use of some repulsive-looking desks, and liberty to copy twenty volumes of manuscript

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precedents, that the great Mr. Twister had copied himself when a pupil with great Mr. somebody else.

The chapel clock was striking nine as father and son entered the dismal precincts of Lincoln's Inn, and before they got to the uncouth outer door that shuts in the chamber set, the great conveyancer had handed his old mackintosh to his bustling clerk, and was pulling a little brown wig straight, preparatory to setting to for the day. The newly-lit fire shed a scanty ray over the cheerless, comfortless apartment, which was fitted up with a large library-table piled with red-taped dusty papers, the representatives most likely of many thousand acres of land, and a rag of a carpet under it, three or four faded morocco chairs, and a large glass bookcase, with a twenty-year-old almanack flopping in front.

"Good morning, gentlemen," said the parchment-faced old man, as the clerk ushered the fresh fly into the spider's web. "Hope to make your better acquaintance," bowing to each.

Old Stobbs would have sat down and told Twister all hopes and fears, but the latter, though a voluminous conveyancer, was a concise conversationalist, and soon cut short the dialogue by looking at his watch, and producing a little red volume indorsed CASH BOOK, he politely inquired what Christian name he should enter, and then observing that his clerk would receive the fee, and show Mr. Charles what to do, he civilly bowed them into the outer room.

Contrasting Twister's brevity with his country solicitor's loquacity, old Stobbs told over his hundred guineas to Mr. Bowker, the aforesaid clerk; and just as he was leaving Lincoln's Inn, his mind received consolation for the otherwise unpromising investment, by seeing the Lord Chancellor arrive in his coach, and enter his court, preceded by the mace and other glittering insignia of office. "Who knows," thought old Stobbs to himself, "but Charles may some day occupy that throne;" and an indistinct vision flitted across the old man's mind, of stuffing the woolsack with the produce of his own sheep.

Shortly after, with an aching heart and fervent prayers for

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his son's happiness, the old gentleman returned to Yorkshire ; and Charles, having removed his portmanteau from the Piazza to a first-floor lodging in Hadlow Street, Burton Crescent, made his second appearance at the chambers of Mr. Twister.

* * * * *

" Oh, it's *you* ! " exclaimed Mr. Bowker, answering the gentle *rat-tat-tat* at the outer door. " Come in, sir, come in—no occasion to knock !—No ceremony !—Paid your footing, you know—One of *us*."

Mr. Bowker, or Bill Bowker, as he was generally called, was a stout, square-built, ruddy-complexioned, yellow-haired, bustling, middle-aged man, with a great taste for flash clothes and jewellery. On the present occasion, he sported a smart nut-brown coat, with a velvet collar ; a sky-blue satin stock, secured by numerous pins and brooches ; a double-breasted red tartan waistcoat, well laid back ; with brownish drab stocking-nette pantaloons, and Hessian boots. A great bunch of mosaic seals dangled from a massive chain of the same material ; and a cut-steel guard, one passing over his waistcoat, secured a pair of mother-of-pearl-cased eyeglasses, though Bill was not in the least short-sighted.

" You're early," said Bowker, as Charles deposited a dripping umbrella in the stand. " You don't look like a sap either," added he, eyeing Charles in a free and easy sort of way, for Bill was a real impudent fellow.

" What is the right hour ? " inquired Charles, with a school-boy sort of air.

" Right hour ? " exclaimed Bill. " *Any time you like*—saps come at opening, others at noon, the Honourable not till afternoon. There are two chaps copying precedents now, that the laundress left here at ten last night—(*tinkle, tinkle, tinkle*, went a little hand-bell). There's the old file himself," observed Bill, bundling off, adding as he went, " be back to you directly."

* * * * *

" Confound these covenants for quiet enjoyment ! " muttered he, returning and opening a pigeon-holed cupboard, labelled

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like the drawers against a chemist's shop wall with all sorts of titles. "I get no quiet enjoyment for them, I know. One, two, three—there—three and one left," returning a few sheets of manuscript to their hole, "free from incumbrances"—("Wish I was," thought Bill)—"and for further assurance—one, two, three," counted Bill; "now let's see if he'll have the further assurance to ask for any more to-day."

* * * * *

"Well now, what can I do for you?" inquired he, returning from the delivery of his "common forms." "There's Squelch-back's settlement, that most pupils copy—five hundred pages! Great precedent! produced ten issues, an arbitration, and a Chancery suit."

"But I think I've something in my pea-jacket that will suit you better," observed Bill, taking up a great coarse large-buttoned pilot jacket, and producing a paper from the pocket. "There," said he, opening it out, "there's 'Bell's Life in London;' you'll see a letter from me signed 'Ajax.' Bring it back when you've done, and don't let the Honourable catch it or he'll burn it." Saying which, Bill presented our pupil with the paper, and opening the door of an adjoining apartment, ushered Charles into a room on the right, in which sat two youths in very seedy, out-at-elbow coats, copying away out of manuscript books.

"Mr. Stobbs, gentlemen!" exclaimed Bill with an air of importance, "Mr. Frost, Mr. Stobbs; Mr. Stobbs, Mr. Frost; Mr. Jones, Mr. Stobbs; Mr. Stobbs, Mr. Jones."

Mr. Frost and Mr. Jones half rose from their chairs, and greeted Mr. Stobbs much in the manner of debtors receiving a chum into their already over-crowded apartment. Frost and Jones were both working men, with their ways to make in the world; they had paid their hundred guineas for a high-sounding name, and betaken themselves to the mechanical drudgery of precedent copying, with an industry worthy of a better direction.

Stobbs's early appearance at chambers inspired hopes that he

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was going to be a working man, but the sight of "Bell's Life" demolished the idea, and the conversation died out as the pupils gradually resumed their weary occupations.

The "Life" was uncommonly lively that morning; there had been a great fight at No Man's Land, between Big-headed Bob and the Pet of the Fancy, which appeared in the glowing language in which poor Vincent Dowling, as good a man as ever lived, used to clothe his pugilistic accounts. How Big-head was caught, and his nob put in chancery, how he sent the Pet's teeth down his trap in return, how both were floored, and picked up by their seconds with their claret corks out.

Then there was a host of correspondence; complaints against stewards; accounts of races; hints to judges; and Ajax's letter, in which he assumed the toga of his master, and dating from Lincoln's Inn, gave some very queer law respecting landlord and tenant. The challenges, too, were numerous. Ugly Borrock of Bristol would eat boiled mutton and turnips with any man in England; Tom Jumper had a terrier he would match against any dog of his weight for ten sovereigns, to be heard of at the Jew's Harp, City Road; Joe Scamp could be backed to whistle; Tom King to run on all fours; and the Lord knows what else.

The advertisements, too, were peculiar. In addition to the usual inquiry after hounds, and offers of horses, there were a suit of Daniel Lambert's clothes for sale, a preserved boa constrictor serpent, notice of vocalisation and frontal-frapidigitation, and the meeting of the judge and jury society at the Coal-hole.

Charles kept reading and wondering, amid occasional interruptions from the arrival and introduction of pupils. They were mostly gentlemenly men, somewhat choked into idleness by the prolixity of Squelchback's settlement. Indeed, their chief claims to the title of reading men consisted in the perusal of the newspapers, of which old Twister furnished the "Times," and they clubbed together for the "Chronicle." Bowker's "Life" was well known, and what with it and a pair of cord trousers Charles had on, they made up their minds that he was a "sporting gent."

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Between twelve and one o'clock, all the gentlemen, except the Honourable, had arrived, and the old question of "fire" or "no fire" was broached. This had been an open question in the chambers ever since old Twister commenced taking double the number of pupils the room would accommodate, and as it furnished great scope for eloquence and idleness, the debate frequently lasted a couple of hours, during which time the saps used to sneak out to dinner, generally getting back in time to vote. This day they stayed, expecting the new pupil would "hold forth," but he was so absorbed with "Bell's Life," that when called upon by the chair, he gave a silent vote; and just as Bill Bowker answered the bell, and let off his old joke about issuing a fiery facias, "the Honourable" arrived, and the room was full.

The Hon. Henry Lollington, the ninth son of an Earl, was quite a used-up West-end man. He was a tall, drawling, dancing sort of a man, in great request at balls, and had a perfect abhorrence of anything coarse or commonplace. He was a mortal enemy to Mr. Bowker, whom he kept at arm's length, instead of treating as an equal, as some of the pupils did.

"Mr. Bowkar," drawled he, as he encountered that worthy in the passage, "bring me a piece of paper, and let me give you orders about my lettars—I'm going to Bath."

"Yes, my LUD!" responded Bill, in a loud tone, to let Charles hear what a great man they had among them.

"Dem you, Mr. Bowkar, I'm not a Lord," responded the Hon. Mr. Lollington.

"*Beg pardon, my Lud!*" replied the imperturbable Bill, bustling out.

Charles at this moment had got into the notices to correspondents, and was chuckling at their humorous originality:—

"Suppose one man to wilfully fire at another with intention of taking away his life, but accidentally misses his aim and kills another, will the laws of our country find this man guilty of wilful murder?" asked a correspondent.

"No," replied the Editor, "but a jury will, and he will be comfortably hanged."

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- "A snake is not a 'barber,' although he 'curls.' The querist is not 'snake-headed,'" was the answer to another.
- "We are not aware that a negro boiled, turns white. If *Niger* will boil one of his children and it turns black, the problem will be solved," he observed to another.
- "J. G.—The 'respectable class of servants' alluded to are very properly employed in turning the mangle; we wish, in their leisure hours, they would turn J. G. inside out."
- "The best cure for carbuncles is to rub them with cheese, and sleep in the domicile of mice, who will eat them off in a night."
- "The masculine for 'flirt' is cock flirt, if there be such a wretch."
- "Apropos.—Hand-shaking is vulgar in polite society upon merely meeting ladies. Pay your respects to the ladies first, married before single."
- "Magdalen.—A gentleman may jilt as well as a lady."

The following American story graced the columns of general information :—

"THE NEGRO AND THE CHEESE.—The 'Boston Post' says, that up at the west-end of that city there is a good-natured, fun-making negro, named Parsis, who hovers round the grocery stores in that neighbourhood rather more than is desirable. Like many other gentlemen of colour, he prides himself upon the thickness of his skull, and he is always up for a bet upon his butting powers, and well he may be, for his head is hard enough for a battering-ram. The other day he made a bet in a store that he could butt in the head of a flour-barrel, and he succeeded. He then took up a bet to drive it through a very large cheese, which was to be covered with a crash-cloth to keep his wool clear of cheese-crumbs. The cheese, thus enveloped, was placed in a proper position, and Parsis starting off like a locomotive, buried his head up to his ears in the inviting target. Parsis now began to feel himself irresistible, and talked up 'purty considerable.' A plan, however, was soon contrived to take the conceit out of him. There being some grindstones in the store for sale, one of them was privately taken up, and wrapped up in the same manner as the cheese had been, and looked precisely as if it were a second cheese, and Parsis readily took another bet for 9d, that he would butt his head through it as easy as he had sent it through the first. The interest of the spectators in the operation became intense. Everything was carefully adjusted, and upon the word being given, Parsis darted like an arrow at the ambush grindstone; he struck it fair in the centre, and in the next instant lay sprawling on the floor, upon which he recoiled. For some minutes he lay speechless, and then he raised himself slowly on his knees, and scratching his head, said, with a squirming voice, 'Bery hard cheese dat, massa! Dey skim de milk too much altogether before dey make him, dat's a fact.' "

At length, amid many chuckles, having fairly exhausted its contents, in compliance with Bill Bowker's request Charles left the room for the purpose of returning his paper. As he departed, Mr. Lollington eyed him through his glass, and with an air of well-feigned astonishment exclaimed, as Charles closed the door—

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“Surely, we’ve got the Tipton Slasher among us!”

“Well,” said Bill Bowker, flourishing his great mosaic seals, as he received the paper from Charles, “that’s *something like*, isn’t it? And how do you like the Honourable? By the way, I forgot to introduce you! Never mind, soon get acquainted—manner against him—but a good-hearted fellow when you know him. Saw him give a gal half-a-crown once for picking up his glove—noble, wasn’t it? Your fiddle-strings will begin to grumble, I guess, for want of your dinner, and by the way, that reminds me, if you hav’n’t got yourself suited for lodging, we have an excellent first-floor disengaged, and Mrs. B. and her sister will be happy to do for you.—Smart gal!—Dances at the ‘Cobourg;’” and thereupon Bill, who had exchanged his fine brown coat for a little grey thing that seemed undetermined whether to be a jacket or a coat, kimbo’d his arms, pointed his toe, and pirouetted in the middle of his office.

Charles replied that he had just taken lodgings in Hadlow Street.

“What, at the feather-maker’s?” inquired Bowker, balancing on one leg.

“No,” replied Charles; “at Mrs. Hall’s, a widow woman’s, number twenty something.”

“I know her!” exclaimed Bill, resuming both feet, “left-hand side of the way, going up—D——d bitch she is, too (aside); pawned her last lodger’s linen—Well, perhaps you’ll bear *us* in mind, in case she don’t suit—Quiet house—no children—private door—sneck key—social party. You’ll find London deuced dull without acquaintance.”

This last observation came home with uncommon keenness, for Charles had begun to feel the full force of that London loneliness, which damps the spirit of many an ardent genius from the country. At their own market town of Boroughbridge, he met familiar faces at every turn, while, in London, all hurried on, or looked as they would at an indifferent object—a dog or a post. The style of living, too, disgusted him.

Instead of the comfortable well-stored table and cheerful fire he had been accustomed to at home, he had to stew into

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hot chop-houses, where they doled out their dinners in portions, and a frowsy waiter kept whisking a duster, to get him away the moment his dinner was done. The dull freedom of manhood did not compensate for the joyousness of boyish restraint.

Mr. Bowker did not give him much time for reflection—"Should have been glad to have taken you to the Cobourg to-night," observed he, "but have a particular engagement—and that reminds me, I must get one of our saps to answer the door when I go, for I must be off before seven. Have to meet a particular friend of mine, a great fox-hunter, to introduce him at the Blue Dragon Yard, where he wants to choose a terrier for the great hunt in Surrey he belongs to. Dessay I could take you if you liked?"

Charles had a taste for terriers, and no taste for his own society, and without ascertaining what Bowker's offer amounted to, he gladly accepted it, and just as that worthy had fixed for him to meet him at his snuff and cigar warehouse in Eagle Street, Red Lion Square, old Snarle tinkled the bell for his biscuit, and Charles returned to the pupils' room.

Having settled, on the motion of Mr. Lollington, that Charles was a snob, he met with little encouragement from his brother pupils. They answered his questions, and were civil, but that was all. There was no approach to sociality, and as a dirty, slip-shod straw-bonneted hag of a laundress scattered some block-tin candlesticks with thick-wicked candles about the pupils' room, Charles repaired to a neighbouring chop-house, to kill time, until he was due at Mr. Bowker's.

* * * * *

At the appointed hour, a fantailed gas-light revolving between miniature negroes stopped his progress up the poverty-stricken region of Eagle Street, and looking up—"BOWKER AND CO.'S WHOLESALE AND RETAIL SNUFF WAREHOUSE," figured in gilt capitals above the shop-front, while a further notification of "THE TRADE SUPPLIED," appeared in

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the window, though the coal-shed, milk-shop, pawn-broking, huckstering appearance of the dirty, narrow, irregularly built street gave a palpable contradiction to the assertion. Large gilt-lettered barrels were ranged along the walls and floor of the shop, and the lower part of the window was strewn with snuff-boxes, meerschaums, loose cigars, and wooden rolls of tobacco.

"Come in!" exclaimed a female voice through the sash-door, drawing a green curtain aside, and showing a fire in the little back parlour—as Charley hesitated about entering, on seeing the shop empty—"Oh, it's Mr. Stobbs!" continued the voice, and a fine fat tawdry woman in ringlets and a yellow gauze gown with short sleeves made her appearance. The pleasure of being recognised in London was grateful, and Charley readily accepted the lady's invitation to enter and sit down.

"Bill'll be here presently," observed she, sweeping a handful of filbert shells off the green baize table-cover, and throwing them on to the fire. "Take a glass of brandy," said she, handing a tumbler off a side-table, and passing the bottle to Charley, to help himself and replenish her glass.

"'Ot with? or cold without?" inquired Mrs. Bowker, pointing to a little black kettle singing on the stand on the upper bar of the fire.

Charles took hot with, and so did Mrs. Bowker; and the handsome dancer from the Cobourg coming in, they all had hot together.

"Is Stobbs here?" now exclaimed Bowker, bursting into the shop with his pea-jacket collar up to his ears, and a low-crowned broad-brimmed hat on his head.—"Ah, you rogue!—what, you've found your way to the ladies, have you?" continued he, throwing open the sash-door.—"Well, sorry to interrupt you, but my friend's a-waiting, so come along and renew your acquaintance here another time. Always happy to see you, you know." Charles bid his fair friends a hasty adieu, and Bowker, thrusting his arm through his, led the way along Eagle Street to the turning down of Dean Street. Under the

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lamp at the Holborn end, stood a man in shape, make, and dress, the exact counterpart of Bowker. Low-crowned, broad-brimmed hat, pea-jacket up to his ears, tights, and Hessian boots, too.

"Sorry to have kept you waiting, sir," said Bowker, in the most respectful tone, as he approached the figure. "Allow me to introduce my friend Mr. Stobbs—Yorkshire gentleman, sir, of great property—Mr. Stobbs, Mr. Jorrocks; Mr. Jorrocks, Mr. Stobbs," adding, *sotto voce*, to Stobbs, "member of the Right Worshipful Company of Grocers."

Mr. Jorrocks raised his hat, and Mr. Stobbs did the same, and then, Bowker offering an arm to each, they proceeded on their way.

High Holborn, what with its carts, coaches, 'buses, and general traffic, affords little opportunity for conversation, and it was as much as the trio could do to keep their place on the flags.

"Cross here," observed Mr. Bowker, as they neared the narrower part of the street, and passing under an archway they suddenly entered upon darkness.

Savage yells, mingled with the worrying, barking, and howling of dogs, issued from the upper part of a building on the right, and Bowker with difficulty made himself heard as he hallooed for Slender Bill.

"I 'opes it's all right," observed Mr. Jorrocks, twisting his watch in his fob, and tripping over a heap of something that lay in his way.

"O, all right, I assure you, sir," replied Bowker, tripping up also. "Confound the rascals," continued he, "near as a toucher broke my neck."

"SLENDER, A-HOOI!" roared he, after three or four ineffectual holloas.

"Coming, masters! coming!" exclaimed a voice, and a person appeared on the top of a step-ladder, holding a blacking-bottle with a candle stuck in the neck.

"Come, Billy! come!" exclaimed Mr. Bowker, peevishly. "Didn't I tell you to be on the look-out for company, and here

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you're letting us break our necks in the dark ; pretty way to treat gents ! Show a light, come ! ”

Billy, all apologies, tripped down the ladder, and holding the candle low enough to discover the steps, crawled backwards, followed by Mr. Bowker and his party.

“ What's to pay ? ” inquired Mr. Jorrocks, as he reached the landing, of a forbidding-looking one-eyed hag, sitting in a little curtained corner partitioned from the scene of action by a frowsy green counterpane.

“ O, Mr. Bowker's free here,” observed Bill to his gentle wife, drawing aside the curtain, and exhibiting the interior. What a scene presented itself ! From the centre of the unceiled hugely rafted roof of a spacious building, hung an iron hoop, stuck round with various lengths of tallow candles, lighting an oval pit, in which two savage bulldogs were rolling and tearing each other about, under the auspices of their coatless masters, who stood at either end applauding their exertions. A vast concourse of ruffianly spectators occupied the benches rising gradually from the pit towards the rafters, along which some were carelessly stretched, lost in ecstasy at the scene below.

Ponderous draymen, in coloured plush breeches, with their enormous calves clad in dirty white cotton stockings, sat with their red-capp'd heads resting on their hands, or uproariously applauding as their favourite got the turn. Smithfield drovers, with their badges and knotty clubs ; huge-coated hackney coachmen ; coatless butchers' boys ; dingy dustmen, with their great sou'-westers ; sailors, with their pipes ; and Jews, with oranges, were mingled with Cyprians of the lowest order, dissolute boys, swell pickpockets, and a few simple countrymen. At the far end of the loft, a partition concealed from view bears, badgers, and innumerable bulldogs ; while “ gentlemen of the fancy ” sat with the great round heads and glaring eyeballs of others between their knees straining for their turn in the pit. The yells and screams of the spectators, the baying of the dogs, the growling of the bears, the worrying of the combatants, and the appearance of the company,

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caused a shudder through the frames of Mr. Jorrocks and the Yorkshireman.

A volley of yells and plaudits rent the building, as the white dog pinned the brindled one for the fourteenth time, and the lacerated animal refused to come to the scratch; and as the pit was cleared for a fresh "set-to," Slender Billy, with a mildness of manner contrasting with the rudeness of the scene, passed our party on, and turned out two coal-heavers and a ticket-porter, to place them advantageously near the centre. This was a signal for renewed uproar.

"Make vay for the real swells wot pay!" roared a stentorian voice from the rafters.

"Crikey, it's the Lord Mayor!" responded a shrill one from below.

"Does your mother know you're out?" inquired a squeaking voice just behind.

"There's a brace of plummy ones!" exclaimed another, as Bowker and Jorrocks stood up together.

"*Luff*, there! *luff! be serene!*" exclaimed Slender Billy, stepping into the centre of the pit, making a sign that had the effect of restoring order on the instant. Three cheers for the Captain were then called for by some friend of Bowker's, as he opened his pea-jacket; and while they were in course of payment, two more bulldogs entered the pit, and the sports were resumed. After several dog-fights, Billy's accomplished daughter lugged in a bear, which Billy fastened by his chain to a ring in the centre of the pit.

"Any gentleman," said he, looking round, "may have a run at this 'ere hanimal for sixpence;" but though many dogs struggled to get at him, they almost all turned tail on finding themselves *solus* with Bruin. Those that did seize were speedily disposed of, and the company being satisfied, the bear took his departure, and Billy announced the badger as the next performer.

Slender Billy's boy, a lad of nine years old, had the first run at him, and brought the badger out in his mouth, after which it was drawn by terriers at so much a run, during which Mr.

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Jorrocks criticised their performances, and with the aid of Charley Stobbs succeeded in selecting one for the glorious old Surrey.

But enough of Slender Billy and his bulldogs. He was a well-known character, but all we have to do with him just now is as the medium of introduction between Jorrocks and Stobbs. That introduction ripened into intimacy, and many were the excursions our friends had together, Jorrocks finding cash, and the Yorkshireman company. But for Jorrocks, and perhaps Belinda, Stobbs would very soon have left the law, whose crotchety quibbles are enough to disgust any one with a taste for truth and straightforward riding; and this lengthened episode brings us back to the point from which we started, namely, Charley's arrival at Handley Cross.

"'Ow are ye, my lad o' wax?" exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks, bouncing out in his sky-blue dressing-gown and slippers, as Charley appeared at the garden-gate, where we have most unceremoniously kept him standing during his introduction.



"Snug and Comfey."

"Delighted to see you," continued Mr. Jorrocks, wringing his hand, and hopping about on one leg; "most 'appy indeed! Bed for yourself—stable for your 'oss; all snug and comfey, in fact. Binjimin!—I say, Binjimin!"

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"Coming, sir!—coming!" replied the boy, settling himself into a fustian coat.

"Take this 'ere 'oss to the stable, and bid Pigg treat him as one of his own—warm stall—thick blanket—lots o' straw—and crushed corn without end. Now, come in," said he to Stobbs, "and get some grub; and let's 'ear all about it." In then they bundled together.

Pretty Belinda took Charles's proffered hand with a blush, and Mrs. Jorrocks re-entered the room in a clean cap and collar just as the trio were settling into seats. What a burst of inquiries followed!

"'Ow's the dad?" asked Mr. Jorrocks.

"'Ow did you come?" inquired Mrs. Jorrocks.

"How is your sister?" half whispered Belinda.

"Where have you been since we last saw you?" was demanded before Stobbs had answered any of the preceding, and a great cry of conversation was got up.

In the evening Mr. Jorrocks celebrated the event with a couple of bottles of fine fruity port, and a night-cap of the usual beverage—"B. and W." as he briefly designates his brandy and water.

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CHAPTER XXV.

MR. JORROCKS AT EARTH.



"A Couple of Seidlitz."

MASTER took a cooling draught—a couple of Seidlitz powders—the next morning, intending to lie at earth, as he said, and was later than usual in getting downstairs. Stobbs improved his opportunity, and got sixteen kisses of Belinda, according to Ben's reckoning, who was listening outside, ere Mrs. Jorrocks made her appearance either. A voluminous correspondence—a week's St. Botolph's Lane letters, and many private ones, some about hounds, some about horses, awaited our master's descent. The

first he opened was the following from our old friend Dick Bragg:—

"LONDON.

"DEAR MR. J.,

"Though I fear it may involve a charge of fickleness, I feel it due to myself to make the following communication:—

"The fact of my having offered my services to you having

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transpired, I have been so persecuted with remonstrances from those whose judgment and good opinion I value, and representations of the impolicy of accepting office, other than in similar administrations to those I have heretofore co-operated with, that I really have no alternative but most respectfully to request that you will allow me to withdraw my previous communication. It is, I assure you, with great reluctance that I make this announcement, knowing, as I do, by sad experience the difficulty there is in obtaining talent even under the most favourable circumstances, let alone in the middle of a season, when everybody worth having is taken up; but it is one of those casualties that cannot be helped, and, in making this communication, allow me to assure you, Sir, that I shall always speak of you with respect, Sir—yes, Sir, I shall always speak of you with respect, Sir, and esteem you, Sir, as an upright gentleman and a downright fox-hunter. Allow me to subscribe myself,

“Yours very faithfully,

“RICH. BRAGG.

“To — JORROCKES, ESQUIRE,
“HANDLEY CROSS.”

“Ah! Rich. Bragg indeed,” grunted Mr. Jorrocks when he read it; “you must think I’ve a deal more o’ the Michaelmas bird i’ me than I have to believe you wrote this afore you got my letter. There, Batsay,” said he, as the handsome maid now entered with the hissing urn, “take that,” handing it to her, “and make curl-papers on ’t, and don’t you be so ’eavy on my witey-brown.”

The next letter he selected was from Mr. Bowker.

“LINCOLN’S INN, LONDON.

“DEAR SIR,

“On calling to pay ‘The Life’ for your advertisement of ‘A hunting-man wanted,’ he expressed a wish for you to contribute information respecting the sport with your hounds; and, knowing I had the honour of your acquaintance, he wished me to sound you on the subject. He says he gets lots of pot-house

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accounts of stag, and bag fox-hunting, with harriers, and such like rubbish ; but what he wants is real sporting accounts of runs with superior establishments like yours. An editor, you know, can't be everywhere, or he would like to have a horse in every hunt in the kingdom ; but he says if you would have the kindness to furnish off-hand accounts, he would spice them up with learning and Latin. He has ' Moore's Dictionary of Quotations,' and can come the classical quite as strong as the great Mr. Pomponius Ego, whom they reckon the top-sawyer in that line. Some gentlemen, ' The Life ' says, send their accounts to a third party, to be copied and forwarded as from an indifferent person ; but that consumes time without answering a good end, as the utmost secrecy may be relied upon, and ' The Life ' is most particular in combing them into English. In short, gentlemen unaccustomed to public writing may forward their accounts to him with perfect confidence.

" You will be sorry to hear the Slender is in trouble. He had long been suspected of certain spiritual runnings, in the shape of an illicit still, at the back of his horse-slaughtering premises in Copenhagen Fields, and an exciseman was despatched last Thursday to watch, and, if necessary, take him. Somehow or other the exciseman has never cast up again, and poor Billy has been taken up on suspicion of having sent him to ' that bourne from whence no traveller returns.' I hope he has not, but time will show.

" Susan Slummers has cut the Cobourg, and got engaged at Sadlers Wells, under the name of Clarissa Howard. I said if she was choosing a name, she might as well take a good one : she is to do genteel comedy, and is not to be called upon to paint black or wear tights. Her legs have got rather gummy of late, from too constant strain on the sinews, and the manager wanted to reduce her salary, and Susan kicked in consequence ; and this reminds me that I have seen a blister in your stable—James's or Jones's, I forget which—that your groom, Benjamin, told me you applied to horses' legs when they are enlarged. Might I take the liberty

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of asking if you think it would be beneficially applied in this case?

"As I presume from a letter I had from Mr. Stobbs the other day that he will be with you by this time, perhaps you will have the kindness to inform him that Mrs. B. will send his 'baccy' by the early train to-morrow, along with your Seidlitz powders, so as to make one parcel do. Old Twist's business is sadly fallen off—my fees have diminished a third—though *my* twist hasn't. We have only half the number of pupils we had. That, however, makes no difference to me, as I never got anything from them but sauce. I hope Mrs. and Miss Jorrocks are enjoying the pure air of Handley Cross. We are enjoying a dense yellow fog here—so thick and so damp, that the gas-lights, which have been burning all day, are hardly visible; I tripped over a child at the corner of Chancery Lane, and pitched head foremost into an old chestnut-woman's roasting oven.

"By the way, I read an advertisement in a north country paper the other day, of 'the eatage of the fog in a park to let.' I wish some one would take the eatage of it here; he'd get a good bellyful, I'm sure. Adieu. Excuse haste and a bad pen, as the pig said when he ran away from the butcher; and believe me to remain,

"Dear Sir,

"Your most respectfully,

"WM. BOWKER..

"To JOHN JORROCKS, ESQ.,

"*Master of Fox-Hounds, &c. &c.,*

"HANDLEY CROSS SPA."

Then before Mr. Jorrocks got half through his city letters and made his pencil observations thereupon—who to do business with, whose respectability to inquire into, who to dun, who to decline dealing with—the gossiping "Handley Cross Paul Pry," with its list of arrivals, fashionable millinery, dental surgery advertisements, &c., having passed the ordeal of the kitchen, made its appearance with the following important announcement:—

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THE

HANDLEY CROSS (MR. JORROCKS'S)

FOX HOUNDS

Will meet on Wednesday at the Round of Beef and Carrots, Appledove-road, and on Saturday at the Mountain Daisy, near Hookey's Hutch, each day at ten o'clock.

N.B. These hounds will hunt Mondays and Fridays, with an occasional bye on the Wednesdays in future.

"Why, you're advertising, I see!" exclaimed Charley on reading the above.

"I am," replied Mr. Jorrocks with a grin; "comin' it strong, arn't I?"

"Very," replied Stobbs, "three days a week—will want a good many horses for that."

"O, I shan't be much troubled on the Wednesdays," rejoined Mr. Jorrocks; "shall jest make that long or short 'cordin' as it suits."

"But you'll go out, I s'pose?" observed Stobbs.

"In course," replied Jorrocks. "In course, only I shall go out at my own hour—may be height, may be sivin, may be as soon as we can see. Not many o' these waterin'-place birds that'll get hup for an 'unt, only ye see as I wants their money I must give them value received—or summut like it; but there's nothing like the mornin' for makin' the foxes cry 'Capevi!' " added he, with a grin of delight.

"Nothing," assented Stobbs.

"We'll 'ave some rare chiveys!" exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks, his eyes glistening as he spoke.

"Hope so," replied Stobbs, adding, "Let's give them a trot out to-day."

"To-day," mused our master—"to-day," repeated he, thrusting his hands deep in his pockets, and then taking a dry shave of his chin—"couldn't well go out to-day. To-morrow if you like—got a lot o' letters to write and things to do—not

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quite right nouter—feel as if I'd eat a hat or a pair o' worsted stockin's."

"To-morrow will be too near your regular day," observed Stobbs.

"Ah, true, so it would," assented Mr. Jorrocks, thinking he must attend to appearances at first, at all events.

"Better give them a round to-day," continued Stobbs, returning to his point.

"Not prepared," mused Jorrocks—"not prepared. Pigg hasn't got himself 'fettled oop' yet, as he calls it."

"Oh, yes, he has," replied Stobbs—"saw him trying on his tops as I came downstairs, and his red coat and waistcoat were lying on the kitchen table."

"Indeed," replied Mr. Jorrocks—"wonder 'ow he looks in 'em. Only a hugely beggar out on 'em."

"He's a varmint-looking chap," observed Stobbs.

"Yes, he is," assented Mr. Jorrocks; "'ope he's keen."

"How's Ben off that way?" asked Stobbs.

"Oh, Bin's a fine bouy," observed Jorrocks, "and I makes no doubt 'ill train on. Rome wasn't built in a day, Constantinople nouter."

"Certainly not," assented Stobbs, thinking if Ben made a sportsman he was very much mistaken.

After a vigorous attack upon the muffins, kidneys, fried ham, marmalade, and other good things adorning Mr. Jorrocks's breakfast table, our Yorkshire friend again tried to draw the great M. F. H. for a day.

"Couldn't we give the 'ounds a trot out by way of exercise, think ye?" asked he.

"Don't know," grunted Jorrocks from the bottom of his coffee-cup. "Wot good would that do?"

"Make 'em handy," replied Stobbs.

"'Andy enough," replied our master, bolting a large piece of muffin. "'Andy as ladies' maids. Can do everything 'cept pay their own pikes."

Despite this confident assertion, Stobbs still stuck to him. First he proposed that Pigg and he should take the hounds out

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together. This Jorrocks wouldn't stand. "Be sure to get into mischief." Then Stobbs thought it would do Jorrocks a vast deal of good to have a bump on one of his great rough horses. Our master couldn't quite gainsay this, though he did look out of the window, observing that the sun had risen very red, that he thought it would rain, and he shouldn't like to get wet.

"Oh, it 'ill not rain," replied Stobbs—"not till night at least," added he confidently.

"Don't know that," grunted Mr. Jorrocks; "Gabey seems to be of a different 'pinion," added he, as the noble old peacock now emerged from under a sun-bright Portugal laurel and, stretching his neck and flapping his wings, uttered a wild, piercing scream.

"Dash my vig, but that looks like it!" exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks; adding, as he caught up his right foot with a shake of his head, "Gabriel Junks is seldom wrong, and my corns are on his side."

Still Stobbs persevered, and, by dint of agitation, at length succeeded in getting Jorrocks not only to go out, but to have a draw in Newtimber Forest; Stobbs observing, and Jorrocks assenting, that there would be very little more trouble in running the hounds through the cover than in trotting them along the road. And, with some misgivings, Jorrocks let Stobbs go to make the arrangements, while he applied himself vigorously to his letters.

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CHAPTER XXVI.

A QUIET BYE.



"A Chance of a Fox."

IGG was all eager for the fray, and readily came into Stobbs's suggestion, that they should go out, and just take their chance of finding a fox, and of his going to ground or not as luck and his courage served.

"Ar'll gan to'ard Duncan's, and get his grey for wor Ben," said Pigg, "gin ye'll set the lad on to saddle the rest;" adding, "The Squi-er ar's warned 'll ride Arterxerxes."

Off then Pigg went to Duncan Nevin's, and returned with a woe-begone looking horse in a halter, before Stobbs had made any progress in his department. Ben was not to be found. Neither at Mrs. Candy the tart-woman's, nor at Mrs. Biffin's apple-stall, nor at Strap the saddler's, nor at any of his usual haunts, was anything to be heard of the boy.

The fact was, he had been unable to resist a ride at the back of a return chaise passing along Juniper Street, and being caught by his apron in the spikes, had been carried nearly to Copse Field before he got himself disentangled.

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The oracle Gabriel having continued his monitions, Mr. Jorrocks thought to make the absence of the boy an excuse for not going, but now having both Stobbs and Pigg ranged against him, he was soon driven from the attempt. Pigg said "Squi-er Stobbs wad de quite as weal as Ben," and Jorrocks, little loth at heart perhaps, at length hoisted himself on to Arterxerxes, with a swag that would have sent a light-carcassed horse over, letting the now smartly-clad Pigg ride the redoubtable Xerxes. So with Stobbs in front, Jorrocks with the hounds, and Pigg behind, they set off at a gentle trot, telling the inquirers that they were only going to exercise, a delusion that Mr. Jorrocks's hat seemed to favour.

Bump, bump,—jog, jog,—on they went; Mr. Jorrocks now chiding, now coaxing, now dropping an' observation fore or aft, now looking at the sky, and now at his watch.

"Dessay we shall find pretty soon," observed Mr. Jorrocks; "for they tells me the cover has not been disturbed this long time; and there's lot's of lyin'—nice, and dry, and warm—foxes like damp beds as little as Christians. Uncommon pretty betch, that Barbara,—like Bravery as two peas,—by Billin's-gate out o' Benedict, I think. 'Opes we may get blood; it'll do them a deal o' good, and make them steady for the Beef and Carrots. W'en we gets the 'ounds all on the square, we 'ill 'ave the great Mr. Pomponious Hego to come and give us a good hoiling. Nothin' like soap."

"Hooi! you chap with the turnip-cart!" now roared our master, to a cartman coming up; "vot do you mean by stickin' your great ugly vehicle right afore my 'ounds!—Mr. Jorrocks's 'ounds, in fact! I'll skin ye alive!" added he, looking at the man, who stood staring with astonishment. And again they went, bump, bump, jog, jog, at that pleasant post-boy pace that has roused the bile of so many sportsmen, and set so many riders fighting with their horses.

At length they reached the cover side,—a long wood stretching up the sides of a gently sloping hill, and widening towards the summit. On the crown there stood a clump of Scotch firs and hollies, forming a landmark for many miles round.

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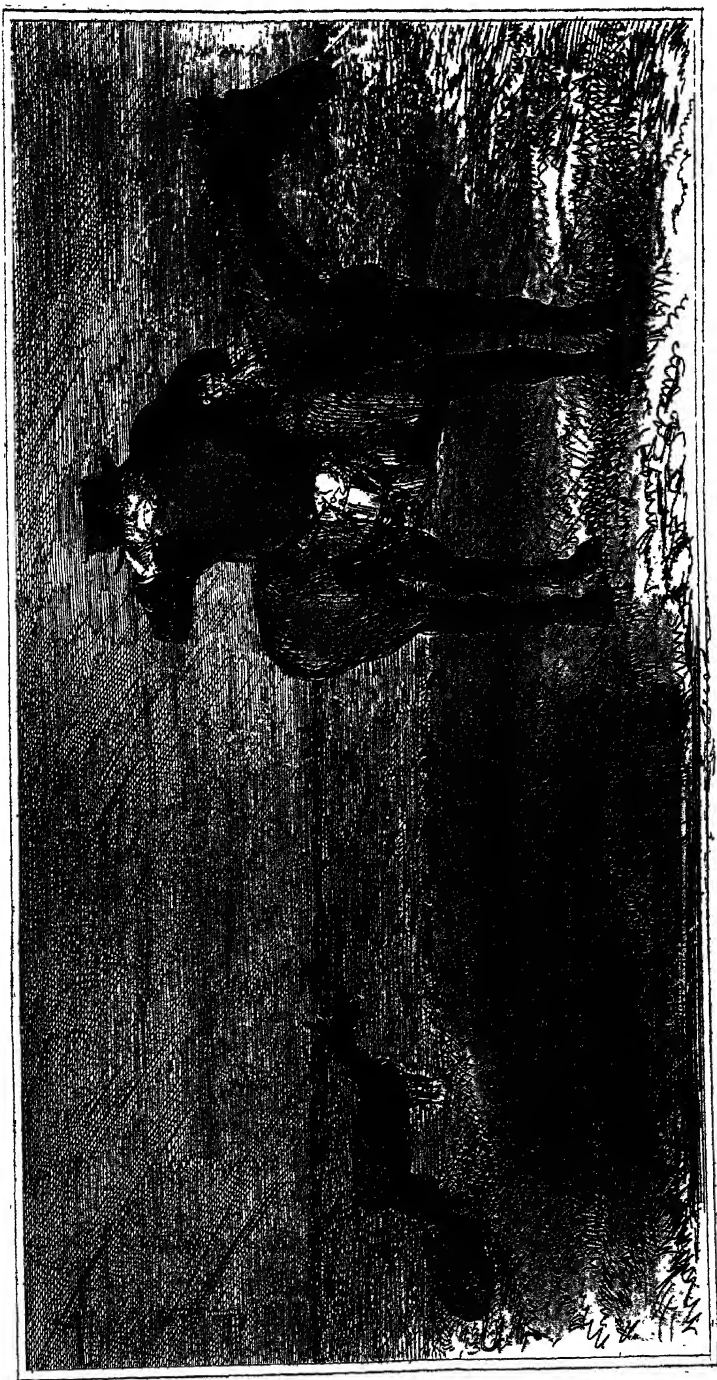
Turning from the high-road into a grass field on the right, the party pulled up to reconnoitre the ground and make their final arrangements.

"Now," said Mr. Jorrocks, standing erect in his stirrups, and pointing with his whip, which had the effect of making half the pack break towards the cover,—“Now, said he, as soon as he had got them turned, “this is a good big wood—two 'undred acres or more—and they tells me the foxes generally lie on the risin' ground, towards the clump. The vind's north-vest; so if we puts hin at this point, we shall draw up it, and p'raps get close to the warmint at startin', which is a grand thing; but, howsomever, let's be doin'. Draw your girths, Pigg, or your 'oss 'll slip through his saddle. Now observe, there are three rides—one on each side, one hup the middle, *all* leadin' to the clump; and there are cross ones in all directions; so no man need be 'fraid o' losin' himself. Now let's put in. Pigg, open the wicket.”

“It's locked,” observed Pigg, running the hammer of his whip into the rails, throwing himself off his horse, and pulling a great clasp-knife out of his pocket as he spoke. “Sink, but it aye gars my knife laugh to see a lock put upon leather,” added he, as he drew the huge blade across the stiff band that secured the gate. Open flew the wicket—in went the pack with a dash, a crash, and a little music from the riotous ones, which gradually yielded to the “Have a cares!” and “*Gently, Wenus;*” “*Gently, Lousey*” (Louisa), with the cracks of the whips of Mr. Jorrocks and his huntsman.

“Now, Pigg, my frind, let's have a touch o' north country science,” observed Mr. Jorrocks, bringing his horse alongside of his huntsman's. “I'd like *well* to kill a fox to-day; I'd praise you werry much if we did.”

“*Aye, aye,*” said Pigg. “Hoic in, Lousey! Solid puddin's better nor empty praise. Have at him there, Statesman, old boy,—ye look like a finder. Deil bon me, but ar thought ar winded him at the crossin' there,” added Pigg, pulling his horse short back to a cross ride he had just passed. “Hoic in there, Priestess, ould gal,” said he to an old black and



Mr. Jorrock, has a Boy-Dog!

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white bitch feathering round some gorse among the under-wood; waving his hand as he spoke. "That's gospel, ar warrant ye," continued he, watching her movements.

"What will't tak' for t'ard nag?" inquired Pigg, of a besom-maker, who now came down the ride with a wretched white Rosinante, laden with stolen brushwood.—"Have at him, there, Challenger!" speaking to a hound.

"Twenty shillin'," replied the man.

"Gie ye eight!" was the answer.—"Yooi, push him up!" to the hound.

"Tak' twelve," rejoined the tinker. "Good horse—can get up of hisself, top puller and all!"

"Aye, but we dinna want him to poole; we want him to eat," replied Pigg. "*Had still!*" exclaimed he; "*ar has him!*" —TALLY HO!" roared Pigg, cramming his spurs into his horse, and dashing past Jorrocks like a shot. Out went both horns—twang—twang—twang sounded Pigg's; wow! wow! wow! went Jorrocks's in deeper and more substantial notes, and in a very short time the body of the pack were laid on the scent, and opened the concert with an overpowering burst of melody.

"Oh, beautiful! beautiful!" exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks, in raptures, as each hound put his nose to the ground and acknowledged the correctness of the scent. "Oh, beautiful indeed!" added he, thumping the end of his horn upon his thigh, as though he were cutting large gun-waddings out of his breeches. "'Ow true to the line! best 'ounds in England, by far—never were such a pack! Shall have a rare Chevy—all alone to ourselves; and when I gets home I'll write an account to 'Bell's Life' and 'The Field,' which nobody *can* contradict. Hark forrard! hark forrard! hark forrard! away!" continued he, ramming the spurs into Arterxerxes's sides, to induce him to change his lumbering trot into a canter, which having accomplished, Mr. Jorrocks settled himself into a regular home seat in his saddle, and pounded up a grass ride through the centre of the wood in a perfect frenzy of delight, as the hounds worked their way a little to his right with a full and melodious cry.

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"Hould hard, ye sackless ould sinner!" now cried Pigg, crossing the main ride at a canter, and nearly knocking Jorrocks off his horse, as he charged him in his stride. "*Had* (hold) *bye, ar say!*" he roared in his master's ear; "or ar'll be dingin' on ye down—fox crossed reet in onder husse's tail, and thou sits glowerin' there and never see'd him."

Out went both the horns again—twang!—twang!—twang; wow! wow! wow!

"Hark together! hark! get forrard, hounds, get forrard!" cried Mr. Jorrocks, cracking his ponderous whip at some lingerers that loitered on the ride, questioning the correctness of their comrades' cry. "*Get forrard, I say!*" repeated he, with redoubled energy. "Confound your unbelievin' souls!" added he, as they went to cry. "Now they are all on him again! Oh, beautiful, beautiful!" exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks, in ecstasies. "I'll lay five puns to a fiddler's farthin' they kill him. Mischief in their cry!—a rare scent—can wind him myself." So saying, he gathered up his reins again, thrust his feet home in the stirrups, crammed the spurs into his horse, and rolled back on the ride he had just come up. "Hark!" now cried our master, pulling up short and holding his hand in the air, as though he had a hundred and fifty horsemen at his tail to check in their career. "Hark!" again he exclaimed; "whoay, 'oss, whoay!" trying to get Arterxerxes to stand still and let him listen. "Now, fool, vot are you champing the bit for?—whoay, I say? He's turned short again! Hoick back! Hoick back! They've overrun the scent," continued he, listening, as the chorus gradually died out; "or," added he, "he *may* have got to ground."

"*Tally ho!*" now screamed Jorrocks, as a magnificent fellow in a spotless suit of ruddy fur crossed the ride before him at a quiet, stealing, listening sort of pace, and gave a whisk of his well-tagged brush on entering the copse-wood across. "*Hoop! hoop! hoop! hoop!*" roared Mr. Jorrocks, putting his finger in his ear, and halloaing as loud as ever he could shout; and just as he got his horn fumbled past the guard, Dexterous, Affable, and Mercury dashed across the ride, lashing their sterns and



"THE BIGGEST FOX WHATEVER WAS SEEN."

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bristling for blood, and Pigg appeared a little below cantering along with the rest of the pack at his horse's heels. "*Here, Pigg! there, Pigg!*" roared Mr. Jorrocks; "just by the old hoak-stump.—*Gently* now! ah, ware 'eel—that's not the vay of him; he's hover to the left, I tells ye. That's him! Mercury has him. Hoick to Mercury, hoick! *get away, get away, get away, 'ounds!* hoick together! hoick together! Oh, Pigg, wot a wopper he is!" observed Mr. Jorrocks, as Pigg joined him in the ride. "The biggest fox whatever was seen—if we do but kill him—my vig! I'll eat his tongue for supper. Have it grilled, '*cum grano salis,*' with a lee-tle Cayenne pepper, as Pomponius Hego would say."

"Aye," replied Pigg, grinning with delight, his cap-peak in the air and the tobacco-juice streaming down his mouth like a Chinese mandarin. "Ar'll be the *death of a shillin'* mysel'!" Saying which he hustled his horse and turned to his hounds.

Away they go again full cry across the cover to the utmost limits, and then back again to the far side. Now the fox takes a full swing round, but won't quit—now he cuts across—now Mr. Jorrocks views him, and swears he'll have his brains as well as his tongue for supper. Pigg has him next, and again comes Mr. Jorrocks's turn. "Dash my vig, but he's a tough 'un!" observed Mr. Jorrocks to James Pigg, as they met again on the rising ground at the top of the ride, where Mr. Jorrocks had been fifteen times and Pigg seventeen, both their horses streaming with perspiration, and the blue and yellow worsted fronts of the bridles embossed with foam. "Dash my vig, but it's a million and a half of petties," continued Mr. Jorrocks, looking at his watch, and seeing it wanted but twenty minutes to four, "that we advertised, for there's a wast o' go left in him yet, and he'll take the shine out of some of our 'ounds before he is done with them—send them dragglin' 'ome with their sterns down—make 'em cry capevi, I'm thinking."

"Niver fear!" exclaimed Pigg—"niver fear!—whativer ye de, keep Tamboreen a rowlin'—yonder he gans! ar wish it mayn't be a fresh un. Arn't draggled a bit."

"Oh, I 'opes not!" exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks, the picture of

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despair. "Would eat him, brush and all, sooner than that. Oh, dear! oh, dear! a fresh fox would be cruel—'ounds deserve him—worked him well."

"Now they begin to *chass*!" exclaimed Pigg, listening to the ripening chorus. "Aye, but there's a grand scent!—Ar'll be the death of a shillin' if we de but kill him. How way, ould man, how way," continued Pigg, cheerily, jerking his arm to induce his master to follow. "Whatever ye de, keep Tamboreena rowlin'!" continued Pigg, spurring and jaggig his horse into a canter.

On man and master go—now they meet Charley, and all three are together. Again they part company for different rides, each according to his fancy. There is an evident improvement in the scent, but whether from a fresh fox, or the hounds having got nearer the hunted one, is matter of doubt. Mr. Jorrocks is elated and excited beyond expression. The hounds are evidently working the fox, but the fear of a fresh one rather mars his enjoyment. The hounds turn short, and Pigg and Charles again join Mr. Jorrocks.

"A! man alive, but they are a dustin' his jacket!" exclaimed Pigg, pulling up to listen;—"iv'ry hund's at him;" saying which he pulled out a large steel box and stuffed his mouth full of tobacco.

* * * * *

A sudden pause ensues—all still as death—not a note—not even a whimper!

"*Who hoop!*" exclaims Mr. Jorrocks in ecstacies—"Who hoop! I say—heard the leading 'ound crack his back! Old Cruiser for a guinea!"

* * * * *

"*Yonder they gan!*" cried Pigg, pointing to a hog-backed hill on the left, over which three couple of hounds were straining to gain the body of the pack—saying which he clapt spurs to his horse and dashed off at full gallop, followed by Charles.

* * * * *

"Oh, dear! oh, dear!" exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks, the picture of despair—"wot shall I do? wot shall I do?—gone away at

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this hour—strange country—nobody to pull the 'edges down for me or catch my 'oss if I gets spilt, and there's that Pigg ridin' as if there was not never no such man as his master. Pretty kettle of fish!" continued Mr. Jorrocks, trotting on in the line they had taken. A bridle-gate let him out of the cover, and from the first hill our master sees his hounds going like pigeons over the large grazing grounds of Beddington Bottoms, with Pigg and Stobbs a little in the rear, riding as hard as ever their horses can lay legs to the ground.

* * * * *

"'Ow that Scotch beggar rides!" exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks, eyeing Pigg going as straight as an arrow, which exclamation brought him to his first fence at the bottom of the hill, over which both horsemen had passed without disturbing a twig.

"'OLD UP, 'OSS!" roared Mr. Jorrocks, seizing the reins and whip with one hand and the cantrel of the saddle with the other, as Arterxerxes floundered sideways through a low fence with a little runner on the far side. "'OLD UP!" repeated he, as they got scrambled through, looking back and saying, "Terrible nasty place—wonders I ever got over. Should ha' been drund to a certainty if I'd got in. Wouldn't ride at it again for nothin' under knighthood—Sir John Jorrocks, Knight!" continued he, shortening his hold of his horse. "And my ladyship Jorrocks!" added he. "She'd be bad to 'old—shouldn't wonder if she'd be for goin' to Halmack's. Dash my buttons, but I wish I was off this beastly fallow," continued he; "wonderful thing to me that the farmers can't see there'd be less trouble i' growin' grass than in makin' these nasty ruddy fields. 'Eavens be praised, there's a gate—and a lane too," saying which he was speedily in the latter, and gathering his horse together he set off at a brisk trot in the direction he last saw the hounds going.

Terribly deep it was, and great Arterxerxes made a noise like the drawing of corks as he blobbed along through the stiff, holding clay.

Thus Mr. Jorrocks proceeded for a mile or more, until he

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came upon a red-cloaked gipsy wench stealing sticks from a rotten fence on the left.

"'Ave you seen my 'ounds, ould gal?" inquired he, pulling up short.

"Bless your beautiful countenance, my cock angel!" exclaimed the woman, in astonishment at the sight of a man in a scarlet coat with a face to match; "bless your beautiful countenance, you're the very babe I've been looking for all this blessed day—cross my palm with a bit o' siller, and I'll tell you *sich* a fortin!"

"CUSS YOUR FORTIN!" roared Mr. Jorrocks, sticking spurs into his horse, and grinning with rage at the idea of having pulled up to listen to such nonsense.

"I hope you'll brick your neck, ye nasty ugly ould thief!" rejoined the gipsy, altering her tone.

"'Opes I *sharn't*," muttered Mr. Jorrocks, trotting on to get out of hearing. Away he went, blob, blob, blobbing through the deep holding clay as before.

Presently he pulled up again with a "Pray, my good man, 'ave you seen my 'ounds—Mr. Jorrocks's 'ounds, in fact?" of a labourer scouring a fence-gutter. "Don't you 'ear me, man?" bellowed he, as the countryman stood staring with his hand on his spade.

"I be dull of hearin', sir," at length drawled the man, advancing very slowly towards our master with his hand up to his ear.

"Oh, dear! oh, dear!" exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks, starting off again; "was there ever *sich* a misfortunate indiividual as John Jorrocks?—'Ark! vot's that? Pigg's 'orn? Oh, dear, only a cow! Come hup, 'oss, I say, you hugly beast!—there surely never was *sich* a worthless beast lapped in leather as you," giving Arterxerxes a good double thonging as he spoke. "Oh, dear! oh, dear!" continued he, "I wish I was well back at the Cross, with my 'ounds safe i' kennel.—Vot a go is this!—Dinner at five—baked haddocks, prime piece of fore chine, Portingal honions, and fried plum-puddin'; and now, by these darkenin' clouds, it must be near four, and here I be's, miles

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and miles away—'ounds still runnin', and adwertised for the Beef and Carrots on Wednesday—never will be fit to go, nor to the Daisy nouter."

"Pray, my good man," inquired he of a drab-coated, big-basketed farmer, on a bay cart-horse, whom he suddenly encountered at the turn of the road, "'ave you seen anything of my 'ounds? Mr. Jorrocks's 'ounds in fact?"

"Yes, sir," replied the farmer, all alive; "they were running past Langford plantations with the fox dead beat close afore them."

"'Ow long since, my frind?" inquired Mr. Jorrocks, brightening up.

"Oh, why just as long as it's taken me to come here—mebbe ten minutes or a quarter of an hour, not longer certainly. If you put on you may be in at the death yet."

Away went spurs, elbows, and legs, elbows and legs, Arter-xerxes was again impelled into a canter, and our worthy master pounded along, all eyes, ears, and fears. Night now drew on, the darkening clouds began to lower, bringing with them fog and a drizzling rain. "Bad go this," said Mr. Jorrocks, rubbing his hand down his coat-sleeve, and raising his face to ascertain the precise amount of the fall. "Bad go, indeed. Got my Sunday 'at on, too. Hooi, bouys! did you see th' 'ounds?" inquired he of a troop of satchel-slung youths plodding their ways homeward from school.

"Y-e-a-s," at length drawled out one, after a good stare at the inquirer.

"'Ow long since? come, *quick*, bouy!"

"May be twenty minutes; just as we com'd past Hookem-Snivey church we see'd fox, and hounds were close ahint—he was *varra* tired."

"Twenty minutes," repeated Mr. Jorrocks, aloud to himself; "twenty minutes—may be a werry long way off by this; foxes travel fast. Vich way were they a-goin'?"

"Straight for Staunton-Snivey," drawled the boy.

"My vig!" exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks, "vot a run; if we don't kill werry soon, it'll be pitch dark, and then there'll be

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a pretty kittle o' fish—th' 'ounds will kill all the ship (sheep) i' the country—shall have a bill as long as my harm to pay."

Fear lent fresh impetus to our worthy friend, and tightening his hold of Arterxerxes's head, who now began tripping and stumbling, and floundering along in a most slovenly manner, Mr. Jorrocks trotted on, and reaching Hookem-Snivey, saw by the foot-people standing on the churchyard wall, that the hounds were "farrard;" he turned down a lane to the left of the village stocks, in the direction the people were looking, and catching Staunton-Snivey in the distance, set off for it as hard as ever he could tear. A pretty clattering he made down the stony road.

Night now drew on apace, and heavy darkening clouds proclaimed a fast approaching storm. At Staunton-Snivey he learned that the hounds had just crossed the turnpike on to the Downs, with the fox "dead beat *close* afore them;" and still unwilling to give in, though every moment increased his difficulties, he groped open a bridle-gate, and entered upon the wide-extending Plain. The wind had now risen, and swept with uncommon keenness over the unprotected open. The drizzling rain, too, became changed into larger, heavier drops, and thrusting his hat upon his brow, Mr. Jorrocks buttoned his coat up to the throat, and wrapping its laps over his thighs, tucked them in between his legs and the saddle. Dismal and disheartening were his thoughts, and many his misgivings for his rashness. "Oh, dear! oh, dear!" muttered he, "wot a most momentous crisis—lost! lost! lost!—completely lost! Dinner lost, 'ounds lost, self lost—all lost together! Oh, vot evil genius ever tempted me from the lovely retirement o' Great Coram Street? Oh! why did I neglect the frindly warnin' o' Gabriel Junks? Change, change—storm, storm—was in his every scream, and yet I would go. Cuss the rain, it's getting down my werry back, I do declare;" saying which he turned the blue collar of his coat up to his ears, and both laps flew out with a desperate gust of wind. "Ord rot it," said he, "it's not never no use persewerin'—may as well give in at once and 'ark back to Snivey; my Berlins

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are wet through, and I shall be drenched in another second. Who-ay, 'oss! who-ay; stand still, you hugely beast, and let me listen." The ducking-headed brute at length obeyed.

"It *is* the 'orn," exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks, after sitting listening for some time, with his hand to his ear; "*it is* the 'orn—Pigg's not far off! There it goes again, but the 'owling wind carries so many ways, there's no saying whereabouts he is. I'll blow, and see if I can 'ail him." Mr. Jorrocks then drew out his horn, and puffed and blew most lustily, but the raging tempest scattered the notes before they were well out of his mouth, and having exhausted his breath, he again paused, horn in hand, to listen. Between each blast of the raging hurricane, the faint notes of the horn were heard, some coming more fully as the gale blew more favourably, and a fuller one falling on his ear, during a period of partial lull, Mr. Jorrocks determined on advancing and endeavouring to rejoin his lost huntsman. "Come hup, I say, you hugely beast!" exclaimed he, getting Arterxerxes short by the head, and digging the spurs freely into his sides. The lumbering brute acknowledged the compliment with a sort of half hitch of a kick. "Great henterpriseless brute—do believe you'd rather 'ave a feed o' corn than the finest run wot ever was seen," observed Mr. Jorrocks, cropping him. Night had now closed in, and even the sort of light of darkness that remains so long to the traveller who journeys onward with the closing day, deserted him, and earth and sky assumed the same sombre hue—

"The dragon wing of night o'erspread the earth."

Scarce a star was visible in the firmament, and the few scattered lights that appeared here and there about the country seemed like snatches of hope lit up for the moment to allure and perplex the wanderer.

"If ever mortal man catches me in such a quandary as this again," exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks, "I 'opes—*oh, dear!* who's there?—Cuss those Seidlitz pooders!—*Speak, I say!*—*vot are you?*—Come hup, 'oss, I say!" roared he, ramming the spurs

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into Arterxerxes, who had suddenly shied off with a loud snort. "Now for a murder!" ejaculated Jorrocks, still cramming in the spurs.

"*E-yah! E-yah! E-yah!*" went a donkey, greatly to the relief of Mr. Jorrocks's mind, who had clenched his huge hammer-headed whip by the middle, so as to give an assailant the full benefit of its weight. Out then went his horn again, and the donkey brayed a full accompaniment.

"Oh, the deuce be with the hanimal!" cried Jorrocks, grinning with vexation. "Never saw a donkey yet that knew when to 'old his tongue. Oh, my rig, vot a vind! almost blows the 'orn itself; shall be blown to hatoms, I do believe. And the rain, too! I really thinks I'm wet to the werry waistband o' my breeches. I'll lay a guinea 'at to a half-crown gossamer I haven't a dry thread upon me in 'alf a minute. Got a five-pund note i' my pocket that will be hutterly ruined. Sarves me right, for bein' such a hass as take these 'ounds—vy wasn't I content with the glorious old Surrey and an occasional turn with the Cut-em-downs? Well; I thinks this night will be the last of John Jorrocks! Best master of 'ounds wot ever was seen. 'Orrible termination to a hactive life; starved on a common—eat by wolves, or shepherds' dogs, which is much of a muchness as far as comfort's concerned. Why even yon donkey would be 'shamed of such an end. There goes the vind with my 'at—lucky it's tied on," added he, trying to catch it as it dangled at his back, "or I should never have seen it no more. I'd give fifty pounds to be back at 'Andley Cross—I'd give a 'underd pounds to be back at 'Andley Cross—knows no more where I am than if I was among the Bohea mountains—oh, dear, 'ow it pours! I'd give two 'underd pounds to be back at 'Andley Cross—yonder's a light, I do declare—*two* on 'em—come hup, 'oss, I say. The hanimal seems to have no sense! I'll lead you, you nasty hugly brute, for I do believe you'll brick my neck, or my back, or both, arter all;" so saying, Mr. Jorrocks clambered down, and getting on to the sheltered side of the animal, proceeded to plunge and roll, and stagger and stumble across the common,

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with the water churning in his great boots, in the direction of the distant lights.

After a good hour's roll about the open Downs, amid a most pelting, pitiless storm, our much-respected master at length neared the longed-for lights, which he had kept steadily in view, and found they proceeded from lamps at lodges on either side of handsome gates, betokening the entrance to a large demesne. Mounting his horse, he rode quickly through the gates, and trusting to the sound of Arterxerxes' hoofs for keeping the road, he jogged on in search of the mansion. Tall stately pines, rising like towers to heaven, with sombre yews in massive clumps, now made darkness visible, and presently a sudden turn of the road brought a large screen full of lights to view, some stationary, others gliding about, which acted like sunbeams on our master's mind; more grateful still was the shelter afforded by the lofty portals of the entrance, under which, as if by instinct, Arterxerxes bore his master, and then stood still to be delivered of his load. "The bell 'ill be somewhere here, I guess," observed Mr. Jorrocks, dismounting and running his hand up either side of the doorposts. "Here's as much door as would serve Jack the Giant-killer's castle, and leave a little over." So saying, having grasped the bulky handle of a wall-ensconced bell, he gave it a hearty pull, and paused, as they say, for an answer.

In an instant two tall, highly-powdered footmen, in rich scarlet and white lace-bedaubed liveries, threw wide the folding-doors as though they expected Daniel Lambert, or the great Durham ox, exhibiting a groom of the chamber and a lusty porter, laying down the newspapers, and hurrying from a blazing fire in the background.

* * * *

"Perhaps you would like to be shown to your room, sir, as you seem wet?" observed the groom of the chamber after a mutual stare, which Mr. Jorrocks did not seem likely to interrupt.

"*Seem* vet!" exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks, stamping and shaking himself, "*seem* vet; I'm just as vet as a man can be and no



MR. JORROCKS AT ONGAR CASTLE.

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vetter ; but what shall I do with my 'oss ? The musciful man, you know, is musciful to his quad."

"Oh, there's a stall ready for him, sir ; your servant's been here this 'alf-hour and more ; I'll send the 'orse round for you, if you'll allow me, sir. Here, Jones, take hold of him, and you, Peters, run downstairs, and tell Saul to come and take it round."

"Yes," added Mr. Jorrocks ; "and tell Pigg to let him have some warm gruel directly, and to get him well done hup, for he's had a hard day. Werry clever of the chap," continued Mr. Jorrocks, "runnin' to ground here—seems a capital house—wot a passage ! like the Thames Tunnel." Jorrocks then stumped in.

"This way, if you please, sir," said the groom of the chamber, motioning him across a magnificent old baronial hall, and turning short up a well-lit, softly-carpeted winding staircase, he preceded Mr. Jorrocks, with a chamber candle, along a lengthy gallery, all hung with portraits of grim-visaged warriors, and small-waisted, large looming ladies. "This is *your* room, sir," said he, at length, opening a partially closed door, and ushering Mr. Jorrocks into a splendidly furnished apartment, whose blazing fire, gleaming on the rich crimson curtains and hangings of the room, imparted a glow that long exposure to the unruly elements made appear quite enchanting. "'Eavens be praised for these and all other mercies !" exclaimed the grateful Mr. Jorrocks, throwing his hat and whip upon the sofa, and plunging into the luxurious depths of a many-cushioned easy chair.

"Your clothes *are* laid out, I think, sir," observed the groom of the chamber, casting a glance at another sofa, on which clean linen, dress clothes, shiny thin shoes, were ranged in the most orthodox order. "P'rhaps you'd like some hot water, sir ?"

"Yes, I should," replied Mr. Jorrocks, "werry much—and a little brandy, if you've no objection."

"Certainly, sir, certainly," replied the well-drilled servant, giving the top log on the fire a lift so as to make it blaze, and lighting the toilet-table candles.

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All this passed with such extraordinary rapidity—the events of the day had been so numerous and exciting—the transition from the depths of misery to the height of luxury so sudden, and, above all, the perfect confidence of the servant so seductively convincing, that not doubting of the accuracy of everything, and placing all to the credit of his renowned name and the acuteness of his northern huntsman, Mr. Jorrocks proceeded with the aid of a boot-jack to suck off his adhering boots, and divest himself of his well-soaked garments. The servant presently returned with a long-necked bottle of white brandy on a massive silver tray, accompanied with hot water, lemon, sugar, nutmeg, and a plate of biscuits. Seeing Mr. Jorrocks advancing rapidly to a state of nudity, he placed them on a table near the fire, and pointing to a bell beside the bed, observed that if Mr. Jorrocks would ring when he was ready, he would come and conduct him to the drawing-room. The servant then withdrew.

“Wonder if Pigg’s killed the fox,” observed Mr. Jorrocks to himself, pouring out half a tumbler of brandy and filling the glass up with hot water. “Capital fun ’unting, to be sure,” said he, sipping away; “’specially ven one gets into a good quarter like this,” continued he, jerking his head; “but desperation poor fun sleepin’ on a common!” and there-upon, after a few more preliminary sips, he drained off the tumbler.

“May as well vet both eyes,” observed he, as he felt the grateful influence of the brandy upon his nearly exhausted frame, saying which he poured himself out another half tumbler of brandy, and adding sugar and lemon, drank off a good part of it, and left the remainder till he got himself washed.

“Werry considerate this,” said he—“werry considerate indeed,” he repeated, taking a large Turkey sponge out of the handle of a hip bath of warm water, shaded from the fire by a glass screen, inside of which upon a rail hung a row of baked towels. “Kettle too,” said he, now attracted by its simmering, “may as well have a boil;” so saying, he emptied the contents into the bath, and pulling off his wig, proceeded to wash and

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disport himself therein, using the sponge as if it was his own. In the midst of his ablutions the door opened, and through the glass screen he saw a servant in a dark coat and scarlet waist-coat enter, and hastily retire as he caught a glimpse of our white Hottentot-like hero squatting in the water. Out Mr. Jorrocks got and bolted the door, and hearing something going on in the passage, he listened for a moment and caught divers scraps of conversation, apparently between a servant and his master, such as, "Why, you stupid fool, don't you know the room? You certainly are the greatest ass ever man encumbered himself with."

"Beg pardon, sir, I could have sworn that was the room."

"Stuff and nonsense! look along the passage; the doors are all so much alike, no wonder a fool like you is puzzled;" saying which the voices moved along, and Mr. Jorrocks heard knocking and opening of doors all along the gallery, until they gradually died away in the distance. Our hero had just done with his bath, and finished his brandy and water, when the sound of returning footsteps again drew his attention to his door, and an angry voice and a meek one sounded alternately through the panels.

"Now what *are* you staring there about, you great idiot—keeping me shivering in my wet clothes. If this *is* the room, why don't you knock?"

"Please, sir, there's a gen'leman in."

"How d'you know?"

"Saw him, sir."

"Then it can't be my room."

"Laid your clothes out in it, howsomever, sir."

"How do you know this is it?"

"'Cause I tied this bit of straw round the 'andle of the door."

"Then knock and ask the gentleman to let you in, and get my clothes out again. You've put them into the wrong room, that's the long and short of the matter—stupid fool!" The servant then ventured a very respectful double tap.

"WHO'S THERE?" roared Jorrocks, in a voice of thunder.



MR. JORROCKS IN A DIFFICULTY.

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"Beg pardon, sir—but I think I've made a mistake, sir, with master's clothes, sir."

"NO YOU HAVEN'T!" replied Mr. Jorrocks, in the same sweet tone as before.

"Oh, beg pardon, sir," rejoined the servant.

"NOW ARE YOU SATISFIED?" roared the master in the Jorrockian strain. "Go along, you fool, and seek a servant."

* * * * *

In a few minutes there was a renewed and increased noise outside, and Mr. Jorrocks now recognised the bland voice of his friend the groom of the chamber.

"Beg pardon, sir," said he softly through the door, "but would you allow me to speak to you for a moment?"

"Certainly," replied Mr. Jorrocks; "talk through the door."

"Please, sir, would you 'blige me with your name, sir?"

"Certainly! Mr. JORROCKS, to be sure! The M. F. H.! Who else should it be?"

"Oh, I fear, sir, there's a mistake, sir. This room, sir, was meant for Captain Widowfield, sir. Those are *his* clothes, sir."

"The deuce!" exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks, in disgust. "Didn't Pigg tell you I was a-comin'?"

"It was the captain's servant I took for yours, sir."

"*Humph!*" grunted Mr. Jorrocks, "that won't do; at all events, I can't part with the garments."

"I will thank you, sir, to let *my* servant remove *my* clothes from *my* room," observed Captain Widowfield, in a slow, determined tone through the door.

"My good frind," replied Mr. Jorrocks, altering his accents, "ow is it possible for me to part with the garments when I've nothin' o' my own but wot's as drippin' wet as though I'd been dragged through the basin of the Paddin'ton Canal? reg'larly salivated, in fact!"

"I have nothing to do with that, sir," exclaimed the Captain, indignantly; "I'm wet myself. *Will you open the door, I say?*"

"No, I *won't*," replied Mr. Jorrocks, "and that's the plain

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English of it!" So saying, he swaggered back to the fire with the air of a man resisting an imposition. He then mixed himself a third tumbler of brandy and water.

It may be well here to mention that the mansion in which Mr. Jorrocks so suddenly found himself was Ongar Castle, where Michael Hardey, the founder of the hunt, found himself at the end of his long and successful run. The vicissitudes of many years had thrice changed the ownership of the castle since the day when the good Earl greeted our primitive sportsman on killing his fox before the castle windows, and the present possessor was nephew to that nobleman, who having that day attained his majority, was about to celebrate the event among a party of friends and neighbours.

Having waited until half-past six to welcome Captain Widowfield, before dressing, his lordship at length concluded the storm had prevented his coming; and the party, consisting of five or six and twenty, were in the act of retiring to their respective apartments to prepare for dinner, when Walker, the aforesaid groom of the chamber, came hurrying along, pale in the face from the *parley* in the passage, followed by the Captain in a high state of exasperation, to announce the appearance of an uninvited guest. No sooner was the name "Jorrocks" announced, than a shout of triumph and a roar of laughter burst from all present; and after learning the particulars of his arrival, which seemed to fill every one with ecstasies (for during the long wait before dressing, they had talked over and abused all their absent friends), his lordship begged the gallant Captain to be pacified, and put up with a suit of his clothes for the evening.

"It was no use being angry with old Jorrocks," he observed, "whom everybody said was mad; and he trusted the amusement he would afford the company would atone for the inconvenience he had subjected his good friend the Captain to."

The doctrine, though anything but satisfactory to a man burning for vengeance, seemed all the consolation the Captain was likely to get, so, returning with Walker, he borrowed the roomiest suit of Lord Bramber's clothes, and while attiring

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himself in them, he considered how best he could have his revenge.

Meanwhile our hero, having disposed of his third tumbler of stiff brandy and water, which contributed materially to the restoration of his usual equanimity, began to appropriate the clothes so conveniently laid out on the sofa.

Captain Widowfield was a stout, big fellow, as bulky as Jorrocks, and much taller, and being proud of his leg, was wont to adorn his lower man in shorts on high days and holidays; so having drawn on a pair of fine open-ribbed black silk stockings, over the gauze ones, Mr. Jorrocks speedily found himself in a pair of shorts which, by dint of tight girthing, he managed to bring up to the middle of his calves. The Captain's cravat was of black satin, the waistcoat a white one, articles, as Mr. Jorrocks observed, that could be reefed or let out to fit anyone, and having plunged into the roomy recesses of a blue coat with Conservative buttons, he surveyed the whole in the cheval glass, and pronounced them "werry good." He then exchanged the Captain's lily and rose worked slippers for his patent leather pumps, and the brandy acting forcibly on an empty stomach, banished all diffidence, and made Jorrocks ring the bell, as though the house were his own.

* * * * *

"You've got me into a pretty scrape with the Earl," said Walker, entering the room. "I thought you were Captain Widowfield."

"Did you?" replied Mr. Jorrocks, placing himself before the fire with a coat-lap over each arm.—"You'll know better another time.—But tell me, what Earl is it you are talkin' about?"

"The Earl of Bramber, to be sure," replied the servant.

"What! this is his shop, is it?" inquired Jorrocks—"Ongar Castle, in fact?"

"Yes; I thought you had been one of the party when I showed you in here," replied Walker.

"Oh, never mind," said Mr. Jorrocks, "where there's

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ceremony there's no friendship—I makes no doubt I shall be werry welcome—See; there's five shillin's for you," giving him a dollar. "You musn't let the Captin in here though, mind. Now tell us, is there any grub to get?"

"Dinner will be served in a quarter of an hour," replied Walker.

"*Dinner!*" exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks, looking at his watch; "ten minutes past seven, and not dined yet; what will the world come to next? Dead o' winter, too!"

Walker then conducted him downstairs, and ushered him into a splendid drawing-room, brilliantly lighted up, whose countless mirrors reflected his jolly person a hundredfold. The housemaids were just giving the finishing sweep to the grates, and the footmen lighting the candles and lamps, when our master entered; so making up to a table all covered with pamphlets and papers, he drew an easy chair towards it, and proceeded to make himself comfortable.

Lord Bramber was the first to enter. He was a tall handsome young man, of delicate appearance and gentlemanly manners. He wore mustachios, and was dressed in a black coat and trousers, with a white waistcoat.

Seeing a stranger, he had no difficulty in settling who he was, so he advanced with a bow and extended hand to greet him.

Mr. Jorrocks was up in an instant.

"My lord, '*necessitas non habet legs*,' as that classical stableman, Mr. Pomponius Hego, would say—or, '*'unger makes a man bold*,' as I would say—I'm werry glad to see you," saying which he shook his lordship's hand severely.

"Thank you," replied Lord Bramber, smiling at his guest's hospitality; "thank you," repeated he—"Hope you left Mrs. Jorrocks and your family well."

"Thank'e," said Mr. Jorrocks, "thank'e, my lordship," as the existence of his better half was brought to his recollection; "'opes I sharn't find her as I left her."

"How's that? I hope she is not unwell?" inquired his lordship with well-feigned anxiety.

"Oh, no," replied Mr. Jorrocks, raising his eyebrows with a

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shrug of his shoulders ; “ oh, no, only I left her in a werry bad humour, and I ’opes I shall not find her in one when I gets back—*haw ! haw ! haw !—he ! he ! he !*—s’pose your ’at (hat) covers your familly—wish mine did too ; for atwixt you and I and the wall, my lordship, women are werry weary warmints. I say, my lord, a gen’leman should do nothin’ but ’unt,—it’s the sport of kings, the image of war without its guilt, and only five-and-twenty per cent. of its danger. You’ve got a werry good shop here—capital shop, I may say,” added he, surveying the rich orange silk furniture and gilding of the room. “ Wonder how long this room is ? Sixty feet, I dare say, if it’s a hinch ;—let’s see.” So saying, Mr. Jorrocks, having set his back against the far wall, took a coat-lap over each arm, and thrusting his hands into Captain Widowfield’s breeches pockets, proceeded to step the apartment. “ One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve, thirteen, fourteen, fifteen, sixteen, when he was interrupted in his measurement by the opening of the door, and entrance of some of the guests. He was introduced to each in succession, including Captain Widowfield, a big, red-whiskered, pimply-faced, choleric-looking gentleman, to whom our worthy master tendered the hand of fellowship, in perfect ignorance of his being the person with whom he had held communion sweet through the door.

Dinner was then announced.

We suppose our readers will not care to have the names of the guests who sat down to the banquet, or yet the wines or viands that constituted the repast ; suffice it to say, that the company consisted chiefly of people in the neighbourhood, sprinkled with a few idle Honourables, who lend themselves out to garnish country-houses in the dull season, and the best French and English cookery furnished the repast.

Despite the prevailing non-wineing fashion, everybody, save Captain Widowfield, drank wine with Mr. Jorrocks, and before the dessert appeared, the poor gentleman, what from the effects of brandy on an empty stomach before dinner, and wine on a full one during it, began to clip her Majesty’s English very considerably. “ Never were such ’ounds as mine,” he kept

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hiccuping, first into one neighbour's ear and then into another. "Never were such 'ounds, (hiccup) certainly—hurrah, I say, (hiccup) Jorrocks is the boy! Forrard! hark, forrard, away! (hiccup). You must come and 'unt with me," hiccuped he to the gentleman on the left. "Beef and Onions on Wednesday, (hiccup)—Candid Pig—no, Mountain-Daisy, (hiccup)—Saturday—James Pigg is a real warmint (hiccup)—a trump, a real trump, (hiccup) and no mistake. Give me port, none o' your clarety wines."

The Earl of Bramber's health, of course, was proposed in a bumper, with "all the honours." Mr. Jorrocks hooped and holloaed at the top of his voice—an exertion that put the finishing stroke to his performances, for on attempting to resume his seat he made a miscalculation of distance, and fell with a heavy thump upon the floor. After two or three rolls he was lifted into his chair, but speedily resuming his place on the floor, Walker was summoned with two stout footmen to carry him to bed.

Captain Widowfield followed to make sure of his clothes; the gap caused by Mr. Jorrocks's secession was speedily closed in, and the party resumed the convivialities of the evening.

The room to which our master was transferred was the dressing-room, over a large swimming-bath, on the eastern side of the castle, and very cozily he was laid into a little French bed. Walker wound up his watch, Captain Widowfield walked off with his clothes, and our drunken hero was left alone in his glory.

The events of the day, together with the quantity of brandy and wine he had drunk, and the fatigue consequent upon his exertions, combined to make Mr. Jorrocks feverish and restless, and he kept dreaming, and tossing, and turning, and tumbling about, without being able to settle to sleep. First, he fancied he was riding on the parapet of Waterloo Bridge with Arter-xerxes, making what he would call a terrible fore-paw (*faux pas*), or stumble; next, that he was benighted on the common, and getting devoured by shepherds' dogs; then, that having bought

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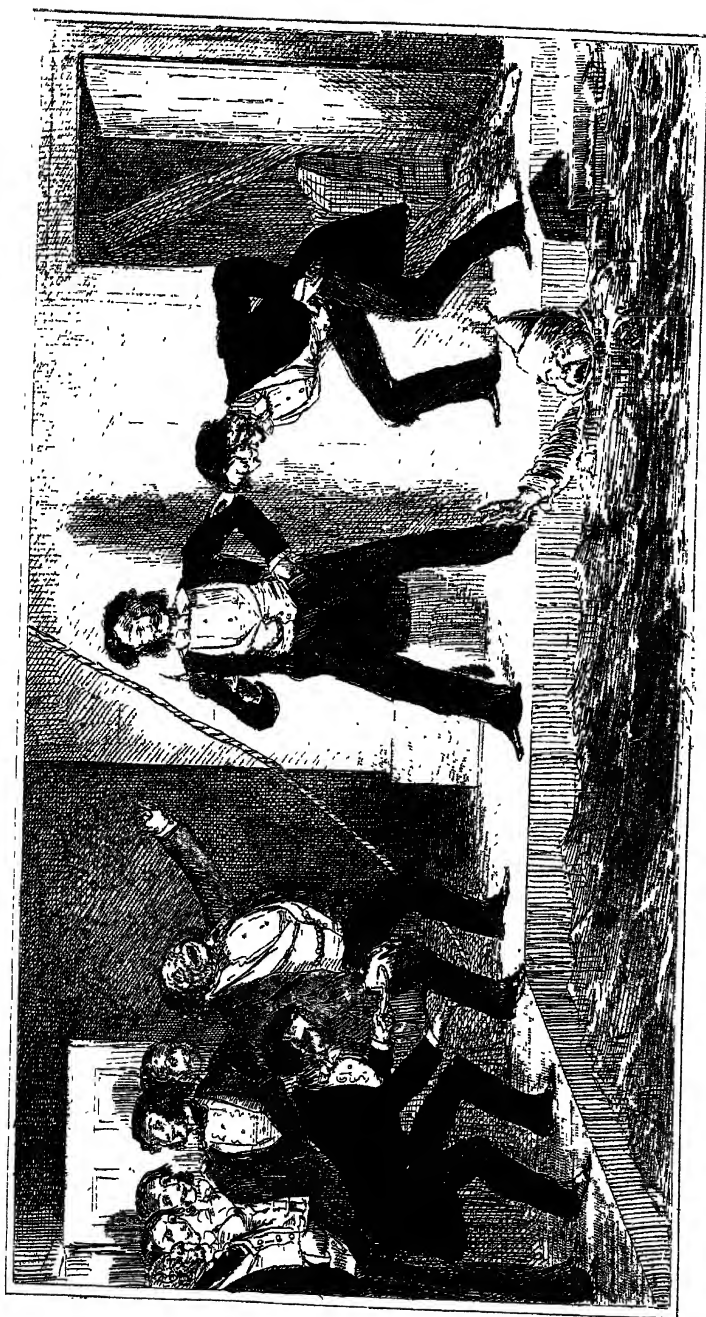
up all the Barcelona nuts in the world, and written to the man in the moon to secure what were there, he saw them become a drug in the market, and the firm of Jorrocks and Co. figuring in the "Gazette."

Next, he dreamt that he had got one of James Pigg's legs and one of his own—that on examination they both turned out to be left ones, and he could not get his boots on. Now that he was half famished, and chained to a wall in sight of a roast goose—anon that the Queen had sent to say that she wanted to dance with him, and he couldn't find his pumps. "No! give him all the world, sir, he couldn't find his pumps." Now that the Prince wanted to look at Arterxerxes, and he couldn't find the ginger. "No! give him all the world, sir, he couldn't find the ginger!" Then he got back to the chase, and in a paroxysm of rage, as he fancied himself kicking on his back in a wet ditch, with Benjamin running away with his horse, his dreams were interrupted by a heavy *crack, bang, splash*, sort of sound, and in an instant he was under water. All was dark and still. His dreams, though frightful, had all vanished as he awoke, and after rising to the top he waited an instant to see if this would not do likewise; but the sad reality was too convincing, so he began bellowing, and roaring, and splashing about in a most resolute manner.

"*Hooi! hooi! hooi!*" spluttered he, with his eyes and mouth full of water. "'*Elp! 'elp! 'elp!* I'm a-drownin', I'm a-drownin'. Mr. Jorrocks is a-drownin'—oh, dear, oh, dear, will nobody come?—Oh, vere am I? vere am I? Binjimin! I say, Binjimin! James Pigg! James Pigg! James Pigg! Batsay! Batsay! Murder! '*elp! murder! 'elp!*'"

"What's happen'd? what's happen'd? what's happen'd? Who's there? who's there? Oh, dear! oh, dear! oh, dear!" screamed half a dozen voices at once, rushing with candles into the gallery of the swimming-bath.

"Vot's 'appen'd?" replied Mr. Jorrocks, blobbing and striking out for hard life with his white cotton night-capped head half under water; "Vy, I'm drownin'.—'*Elp! 'elp! 'elp,* I say! Oh, vill nobody come to '*elp?*'"



Mr. Forrester, Bath.

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“Throw out the rope! throw out the rope!” cried half a dozen voices.

“No; get a boat,” responded Mr. Jorrocks, thinking there was little choice between hanging and drowning. “Oh dear, I’m sinkin’, I’m sinkin’!”

“Come to this side,” cried one, “and I’ll lend you a hand out;” thereupon Mr. Jorrocks struck out with a last desperate effort, and dashed his head against the wall.

They then pulled him out of the bath, and with great care and condolence put him to bed again. He was still rather drunk—at least, not quite sober; for when pressed to exchange his wet shirt for a dry one, he hugged himself in it, exclaiming, “No, no; they’ll worry it! They’ll worry it!”

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CHAPTER XXVII.

ANOTHER BENIGHTED SPORTSMAN.

“ Heard the winds roar, and the big torrent burst.”—THOMSON.



WELL, I can't stand it any longer, so it's no use trying," said Charley Stobbs to himself, turning his horse's head in the direction of a light he saw gleaming past a window on the left of the road.

Having about got through his horse, and lost Pigg and the hounds, he had taken temporary refuge at a small public-house, which he had imprudently left in hopes of regaining Handley Cross that night.

After much casting about in the dark, with the imperfect and contradictory directions usually obtained from peasants in remote parts, Charley's perseverance at length failed him, and he resolved to give in.

The night was drear and dark—the wind howled and whistled with uncommon keenness—and the cutting hail drifted with the sharpness of needles against his face. Horse and rider were equally dispirited.

Having formed his resolution, Charley was speedily at a white gate, whose sound and easy swing denoted an entrance of some pretension.

A few seconds more, and he was under the lee of a large house. Having dismounted, and broken his shins against a scraper, he at length discovered a bell-pull in the doorpost, which, having sounded, the echoing notes from afar proclaimed the size and importance of the mansion.

All was still, save the wild wind, which swept over the lawn.

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dashing a few straggling leaves about with uncommon fury. Charley stood dripping and shivering, with his horse in his hand, but no one came—all was still within. Another pull sounded through the house, and a third succeeded that. At length, in a partial lull, a soft female voice was heard through the door, inquiring, "Who was there?"

"*Me!*" exclaimed Charley. "Mr. Stobbs!—a benighted fox-hunter—been out with Mr. Jorrocks's hounds."

"Master's gone to bed," replied the servant, drawing the bolts and chain as she spoke; and just as she began to open the door, a sudden gust of wind extinguished her candle.

"I'll run for a lantern," exclaimed she, shutting to the door, leaving Charley stamping and thumping himself with his hands. Presently she returned with a dark lantern, with the slide up, which threw a light over the horseman without discovering the holder.

The sight of a red coat banishing fear, she closed the door after her and informed Charley that master was gone to bed, and the butler too, but she would show him the stable, and get a man to take charge of the horse. The Yorkshire nag seemed to understand the arrangement, for he immediately gave himself a hearty shake, as if to say that his labours were done at last.

The maid led the way, and on they went to the stable. It formed the wing of the house, and a groom, sleeping above, being roused from his bed, came with the alacrity usually displayed by servants in the service of a red coat.

Indeed, as Mr. Jorrocks says, there's no colour like scarlet. In it, a man winks at the women, rings at your bell, orders your brandy, rides through your garden, and all in the style of doing you a favour. The half-dressed groom would whole-dress the horse, and get him some gruel, and clothe him well up, and litter him well down; and as he hissed, and pulled at the horse's ears, he paused every now and then and grinned with delight at Charley's account of the sport.

"A', it must have been a grand run!" exclaimed he; "and where did you kill him?"

"Don't know that," replied Charles. "We got upon the

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Downs, when it became actually racing—the fox going in the teeth of the wind, and no one with the hounds but the huntsman, and a farmer who cut in during the run. I got into a bog, and the hounds ran clean out of sight before I recovered my horse, and night came on without my even being able to hear or see anything more of them.”

“Dear!” exclaimed the groom, “you don’t say so—that *was* a bad job; and was Squire Jorrocks not up?” Thereupon the groom dived elbow-deep into the gruel-pail, and, lifting it up, the horse quaffed off the contents like a basin of soup. Blankets and bandages came warm from the saddle-room fire, and having seen his horse well done by, and told the groom all he could about the run, Charley again sought the shelter of the house.

The little maiden had returned there after providing the gruel, and was ready to open the door as she heard Charley’s approach. “She would show him into the parlour,” she said, “where there was a good fire;” and forthwith led the way up a long passage, with a couple of steps in the centre. The parlour was evidently the master’s room—the *sanctum sanctorum*—a small snuggerly, with book-shelves on two sides—guns, swords, game-bags, powder-tryers, fishing-rods, &c., on the third—and a red-curtained window on the fourth; a round table, with the fragments of dessert, an empty and a half empty decanter stood before the fire, while a well used red morocco easy-chair stood on one side of the table.

“A bachelor,” said Charley to himself, glancing at the table and chair, and then at the pretty maid, whose corkscrew curls dangled down her healthy cheeks, despite the unruly elements to which they had just been exposed; “clear case that, I think,” said he, eyeing the fit of her nicely done-up blue cotton gown, and well-turned ankles, with broadish sandalled shoes. “No missis would keep such a pretty blue-eyed maid as that,” said he to himself.

“Would you like to take anything, sir?” inquired she, lighting the wax candles, and casting a look of commiseration at Charley’s wet breeches.



"YOU'RE A DARLING," EXCLAIMED CHARLEY.

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"Nothing, thank you, my pretty dear, except—a kiss," giving her ruby lips a smack that sounded along the passage.

"*Hush!*" exclaimed she, colouring up, in alarm. "Mrs. Thompson will hear."

"And who's Mrs. Thompson?"

"The housekeeper, to be sure; she's just gone to bed."

"Well, if that's the case," replied Charles, "I think I should like a little sherry and water, or something," lifting up the half-emptied decanter, "if you could get some hot water and sugar; or never mind the sugar, if Mrs. Thompson's got the keys."

"Oh, I'll get you both," replied blue-eyes, tripping away.

Charles now began to reconnoitre the apartment. Taking a light, he proceeded to examine the bookcase. There was a curious mixture:—Burns's Justice and the Gentleman's Magazine; Statutes at Large and Anderson's Agriculture; the Tatler and Pope's Homer; Don Quixote and the Old Sporting Magazine; Seneca's Morals and Camden's Britannia; Osbaldestone's British Sportsman; Calamy's Sermons and Adam's Essays; Walker's Pronouncing Dictionary and Sidney's Arcadia; Dacier's Plutarch and White's Farriery.

"Sporting parson, perhaps," thought Charles to himself. "No, that can't be," continued he; "no bachelor parsons—at least, not with such houses as this. Some young man just come to his fortune, most likely, and hasn't had time to pick up a wife yet. No, that won't do; a young 'un wouldn't be in bed so soon as this." Blue-eyes interrupted the speculation by appearing with a tray containing a nice plate of ham sandwiches, hot water, sugar, lemon, nutmeg, &c.

"You're a darling!" exclaimed Charley, squeezing her hand as she placed them on the table. "By Jove, there's no work done with *that*," said he to himself, as she ran out of the room; "soft as a mowdy-warp!"

Charley took the red morocco chair, and mixing himself some negus recommenced his speculation on the probable station of his host. The books and the blue eyes, and the guns and the soft hand confused him; and the more he thought,

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the nearer he was falling asleep—and the farther from arriving at a conclusion.

“Master’s gone to bed,” muttered Charley, recollecting the little maid’s first observation. “No mistress, that’s clear;” and thereupon he drained off his tumbler, and filled up another. “Curious assortment of things he has in his room,” thought Charley, looking about him. “I don’t see a hunting-whip,” and having satisfied himself on that point, without moving from his chair, he commenced a vigorous attack on the ham sandwiches.

* * *

“Shall I show you to bed?” inquired the little maid, peeping in at the door just as Charley was dropping asleep.

“If you please, my dear!” replied he, starting up, rubbing his eyes, and draining off the tumbler of sherry and water that had been cooling at his elbow.

The maiden lighted a bed-candle, and proceeded to lead the way up a wide, black oak staircase, whose massive, shining banisters were ornamented with carved birds, monkeys, guinea-pigs, and other specimens of zoology, at the turns of the frequent landings. The wind had lulled, and the heavy ticking of a large black-faced timepiece with gilt figures was all that disturbed the monotony of the night.

Lightly following his fairy guide, an involuntary hope came over Charley that he might not make the acquaintance of his host through the medium of a horse-pistol cocking at him through one of the black doors as they passed. Turning from the wide passage up a narrower one on the left, a gleam of light through a partially closed door showed the termination of his travels, and throwing it open, a large poker in a downward slant evinced the activity of the little maid, who had lighted the fire, got the room ready, and all the little arrangements made, while Charles was busy with his negus and speculations.

We need scarcely say that the room was not that bugbear to humble minds—the best one in the house, up whose lofty beds short-legged men swarm as though they were climbing a tree,

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but it was one of those betwixt-and-between sort of apartments, that, like the pony in a stable, comes in for most of the work. The bed was exceedingly low, scarcely two feet from the ground, and stood in the centre of the room, with the head against the wall and the feet towards the fire. The curtains were of thick but faded orange damask, and the counterpane was patchwork of many colours. Round the bed was a slip of black-and-red carpeting; another piece lay before a dressing-table, on which was a curious old black-and-gilt Chinese-patterned looking-glass, with many drawers, and the thoughtful little maiden had placed another piece of carpeting under the foot-bath before the fire. The rest of the floor was bare, and there was a large black oak press in the corner, with richly carved festoons above the drawers, and coats of arms emblazoned on the panels.

"Shall I take your coat down to dry?" inquired the little maiden, slipping the poker out of the fire.

"If you please," replied Charles; "but first you must help me out of it." Whereupon she put down the poker, and taking hold of the cuff, Charles drew himself out of the adhering garment. "Now," said he, giving her the wet scarlet and a kiss at the same time, which produced a corresponding effusion in her cheeks, "how shall I know about getting up in the morning?"

"Oh, Aaron will call you!" replied the little maid, seizing the poker and tripping away.

"Aaron will call me!" repeated Charley, returning from chasing her to a green-baized door at the end of the passage. "Aaron will call me!—what a queer name for a servant!—wonder what the master is? Aaron!—'Gad, he must be a priest, and Aaron is his clerk and *valet-de-chambre*. No, that can't be, either, for here's a boot-jack, a thing one never meets with in a parson's house; and as I live! no end of sporting pictures," added he, holding his candle to the wall.

Sure enough, there were Loraine Smith's famous pictures of the Quorn Hunt, the progenitor of the now innumerable race of sporting prints; "Bagging the Fox;" "The Rendezvous of the Smoking Hunt at Braunstone," in which gentlemen

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appear with great meerschaums in their mouths; "The Loss of the Chaplain," exhibiting a reverend gentleman somewhat in Mr. Jorrocks's predicament—in danger of drowning, if he were not in equal danger of hanging; "The Meeting at Grooby Pool;" "The Victory of obtaining the Brush," &c.; all stretched on canvas, with broad gilt borders, and ranged round the room. Above the fireplace was the portrait of an old gentleman in a cocked hat, a gold-laced blue coat, with a snuff-box in one hand, and the other resting on the head of a greyhound, whose master seemed to look upon Charley, as he sat up to his knees in hot water, in anything but a patronising way.

"Should this be my host, or even my host's father or grandfather," thought Charley to himself, "perhaps he may not be over glad to see me; however," added he, "'enough for the day is the evil thereof,'" so, exchanging his damp shirt for a nice well-aired cotton one, with the initials J. W. F., on one side, and rejecting both a double and single nightcap, laid out for his choice, he put out his candle, and turned into bed.

* * * * *

Sound and healthy were his slumbers;—day dawned without his waking, and neither the darting rays of a dazzling sun brightening the moreen curtains through the chinks of the shutters, nor the noisy tick of the passage clock, had any influence on his sleep.

At length he started up, as a sledge-hammer sort of thump sounded on the door.

"Come in!" exclaimed he, involuntarily, the exertion of which awoke him to a recollection of the past and a sense of his situation. "How deuced awkward!" thought he to himself, looking at a great bell-tassel hanging above his head, and considering whether he should pull it or not.

"Thump!" went the door again, and no mistake.

"Come in!" exclaimed Charley; but still no one entered. "Must get up at all events," reasoned Charley;—"must be eight, at least," looking at the rays of sunshine shooting into the room. Just as his hand grasped the bell-pull—

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“Thump!” went somebody at the door again.

“COME IN!” roared Charles, for the third time, but still the door remained closed. Just as he was debating whether to ring the bell or compose himself for another nap, the door opened, and a slow, heavy foot paced steadily across the room to the window. Drawing aside the window-curtain, the heavy cross-bar swung lengthways in the shutter, which being folded exhibited the person of the intruder.

He was an elderly, clumsily built, middle-sized man, with a brown scratch-wig, surmounting a square, thick-featured, unmeaning countenance. A schoolboy’s turnip lantern would perhaps convey the best idea of the style of his much-tanned face and features. He was dressed in a snuff-coloured coat, loose buff waistcoat, puddingy-white neckcloth, drab kerseymere breeches; and his swelling calves and enormously thick ankles were cased in white lambswool stockings; thick shoes, with leather strings, completed his costume. Having opened the shutters, he stumped to the foot of the bed, and placing himself right in the middle, thus delivered himself in good set Zummerzetzhire,—

“Please, zur, meazter gittin oop.”

“Thank you, Aaron!” exclaimed Charles, never doubting his man. “Pray can you tell me what o’clock it is?”

“I’ll zee, zur,” replied Aaron, after a pause, stumping out of the room to consult the passage clock.

“What a man it is!” exclaimed Charley, burying his face in the pillow, as he roared with laughter at his unmeaning, cast-iron countenance. “What *can* his meazter be!” Presently, creak, creak, creak, announced old heavy-heels returning. Placing himself in his old position, exactly at the centre of the bed, he thus delivered himself—

“Pleaz, zur, it’s nineteen minutes pazt eight. Will you pleaz, zur, to want anything more, zur?” at length inquired the stupid old man.

“*More!*” thought Charles, “why, I’ve got nothing as yet,” wishing he had his female *valet-de-chambre* of the previous night back instead of old Aaron. “Yes, I should like some

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warm water for one thing, and my boots cleaned for another," looking at his mud-stained tops standing against a chair near the foot-bath. Razors, brushes, combs, sponges, and a host of etceteras flitted across his mind, but considering the slowness of Aaron, and the state of his raiment, Charles thought he had better do with as little as possible. Out, then, old Aaron stumped, and Charles was left alone to his reflections.

"Confounded awkward!" said he to himself, ruminating on his situation. "Suppose there's a mistress or young misses, what a figure I shall cut at a breakfast-table! Leathers like parchment, boots all dirt, neckcloth spoiled; better start off, and take my chance on the road, or breakfast when I get home." Then the recollection of the previous night deranged his reasoning. The little snugger, the solitary easy-chair, the remnants of dessert instead of tea, and the little blue-eyed maid, all savoured of bachelorism; so dismissing the lady consideration from his mind, he again applied himself to the question of what his host could be. Aaron and the blue-eyed maid were inconsistent. Such a pretty little girl, and such a very ugly old man—one so sharp, the other so slow—"and yet what a stupe I am," continued Charles; "Aaron's just the sort of man to keep in the house with a pretty girl;" and thereupon his host assumed the character of a fox-hunter, and Charles felt as if he knew him already.

"No, that won't do," continued Charles, demolishing the vision he had just conjured up; "she wouldn't have blushed so if she'd been used to kissing;" and thereupon his spirits fell below zero. Stump, stump, stump, creak, creak, creak, came old heavy-heels along the passage, disturbing Charles's reverie as well by his footsteps as his sledge-hammer thumps at the door. Thrice did he thump ere he would enter, and at length, when he did, having deposited a can of hot water on the wash-hand stand, he laid Charley's scarlet coat exactly in the centre of the table, and resuming his old position at the foot of the bed, cast his unmeaning eyes towards the pillows, and drawled out—

"Please, zur, do you pleaz to want anything elze?"

"Nothing but my boots cleaned!" exclaimed Charles,

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exhausted by his slowness; "though, perhaps," added he, as Aaron was stumping away, "you may as well make my compliments to your meazter, and say that a gentleman, who lost his way out with the hounds yesterday, wishes to pay his respects to him at breakfast—or rather (aside), to his breakfast."

"Yeaz, zur," replied Aaron, trudging out. Up Charles jumped, and making for the window, surveyed the prospect outside.

Immediately below the terrace was an ill-kept garden, divided by massive clipt yew-hedges, opening by antique white gates upon an undulating park, girded by a river. A few cows stood listlessly to the sun, and two or three mares and yearlings scratched themselves with the lower branches of the trees with which the park was plentifully studded. The tufty grass showed the land was not overstocked. Beyond the river a rich grazing vale stretched to distant hills, whose undulating outline closed the grey horizon.

Having made his survey, Charles proceeded to dress. "Wish I had little blue-eyes to get me what I want," thought he, pulling on a stained stocking, and looking at his shirt where the wet had soaked through his coat. Just then old Aaron was heard plodding back with his boots, which having placed at the door, he gave a loud thump, and asked if Charles wanted anything more.

"Oh, no!" replied Charles, opening the door, and taking in the dingy tops; "but tell me, what did your master say to my message?"

"He said varra well," replied Aaron, stroking his hand over his wig.

"He said varra well," repeated Charles, shutting the door in disgust. "What an inhospitable answer—fear he's no fox-hunter—would have been up with shaving-pot and razors before this; however, never mind, I'll soon be back to old J. and Belinda." So saying, he began handling his leathers; they were tolerably dry, except at the knees, but were desperately the worse for wear—large mud-stains disfigured their creamy

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colour, and there was a great black patch down one side, where he had rolled in the bog. However, he coaxed himself into them, and pulling on his boots he made the best he could of his damaged blue neckcloth, while his cord waistcoat and red coat felt grateful for their acquaintance with the fire.

He was now ready for a start; and, the passage clock striking nine, in an Aaron-like pace Charles made for the sound, and soon got into the gallery he had traversed overnight. Descending the zoological staircase, he found his friend Aaron standing with his ear at a door, listening, like a terrier at a rat-hole; Charley would fain have had a word with him, but Aaron gave him no time for inquiry, by opening the door, and discovering the top of a well-powdered head, with a pigtail cocking above the red morocco chair.

"*The gentleman, sir,*" said Aaron, advancing to the back of the chair.

Up jumped a little red-faced old gentleman, who, depositing a newspaper on the breakfast-table, made a profound Sir Charles Grandison salaam as he presented a full front to the enterer.

He was dressed in a single-breasted high-collared blue coat, with large silver buttons, white cravat, with a black one over it, buff waistcoat, with flap-pockets, cut out over the hips, yellow leather breeches, and rose-coloured top boots, buckling round his knees with broad leather boot-garters.

Charley bowed his best in return, and thinking what a sorry figure his much-stained clothes must cut by the spotless ones before him, began muttering something about fox-hunting, boldness, benighted, hospitality, hungry—the little old gentleman jerking and bowing all the time, and motioning him into a chair on the other side of the round table.

Glad to hide his dilapidations under the table, Charley sidled to the seat, and tucking his napkin under his waistcoat, cast his eye round the apartment, and then began to reconnoitre the well-furnished breakfast-table.

His host resumed his seat, and jerking out his short legs as though he were on horseback, fixed his little beady black eyes

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upon Charles, and opened a voluble battery with—"Charming sport fox-hunting!—was a *great* sportsman myself!—one of the fastest of the fast—long since now—days of old Sef. in fact—have often sat up in the saddle-room at Quorn playing cards till it was time to go to cover. Those *were* the days! No such young men now—degenerate race, quite—horses, too, all good for nothing—bad and weedy—no welters—shall never see such horses or hunting again as we used then—real science of the thing exploded—all riding and racing—no such men as old Meynell—or Corbet, or Lambton, or any of your lasters. Swell masters ruin a country—go a burst, and are done—foxes now run short and bad—worse than hares—if it wasn't the grass the thing would be over. Pray make yourself at home. Take tea or coffee? None of your flagon-of-ale and round-of-beef breakfasts nowadays—slip-slop, wishy-washy, milk-and-water, effeminate stuff—spoil nerves—no such riders as there used to be. Cold fowl on the sideboard—Aaron will bring some hot sausages directly.—Turf seems all rotten—saw O'Kelly's young Eclipse win the Derby in 1781—horses *were* horses then—Eclipse—Florizel—Highflyer—Juniper—men that might be called sportsmen and gentlemen too—not your half lord and half leg.

"There was Lord Abingdon," continued the old gentleman, telling them off on his fingers—"Duke of Bolton—Sir Charles Bunbury—Mr. Bradyll—Lord Clermont—Mr. Jolliff—remember his bay horse, Foxhunteribus by Fox-hunter, well. Then there was Lord Milsintown—Mr. Pulteney—Mr. Panton—Duke of Queensbury—and a host whose names I forget. Ah! those recollections make an old man of me. Well, never mind! I've had my day, and the old 'uns must make way for the young;" then, turning short upon Charley, who was glancing at the newspaper as it lay on the table, he said, with a jerk, "Allow me the privilege of inquiring the name of the gentleman I have the honour of addressing."

This was a poser, and coming after such a string of high-sounding names, poor Charles's humble one would cut but a poor figure. It so happened, however, that he was just

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skimming by a sort of sidelong glance the monthly advertisement of the heavy triumvirate, wherein well-known "unknowns" make names for themselves much better than their own. There was "Shooting, by Ranger," and "Racing, by Rover," and "Fishing, by Flogger," and in larger letters, as if the great gun of the number, "A TRIP TO TRUMPINGTON, BY POMPONIOUS EGO."

Charles had just got so far as this, when suddenly interrogated as described, when he unconsciously slipped out the words, "Pomponius Ego."

"Pomponius Ego!" exclaimed the little gentleman, jumping on to his short legs as though he were shot, extending his arms and staring with astonishment, "I never was so out in my life!"

Charley—"I beg pardon——"

"No apologies, my dear sir," interrupted our host, resuming his seat with a thump that stotted his short legs off the carpet. "No apology! no apology! no apology! We old men are apt to fancy things, to fancy things, to fancy things—and I candidly confess I pictured Pomponius Ego quite a different sort of man to myself."

Charles—"But if you'll allow me to ex——"

"No explanations necessary, my dear Mr. Ego—Mr. Pomponius Ego, I mean," jabbered the voluble little old gentleman. "Eat your muffin and sausages, and believe me you're heartily welcome; I've lived long in the world—take some more coffee—there's tea if you like it—but I never was so out before. Lord! if old Q.* could see me!" continued he, clasping his hands, and casting his eyes up to the ceiling.

Charley—"Well, but perhaps, sir——"

"There's no *perhaps*'s in the matter, my dear sir—no perhaps in the matter; I'll tell you candidly, I pictured Pomponius Ego a prosy old chap, who went the horse-in-the-mill round of his stories from sheer want of originality and inability to move from home in search of novelty. The only thing that ever staggered me was your constant assertion, that second horses

* The sporting Lord Queensbury used to be called "Old Q."

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were unknown in Leicestershire in Meynell's time. Never was a greater fallacy, saving your presence ! Always had a second horse out myself, though I only rode eight stun ten—never took soup for fear of getting fat—a host of others had second horses—Lambton and Lockley, and Lindow and Loraine Smith, and—But never mind ! don't assert that again, you know—don't assert that again. Now take another sausage," pushing the dish towards Charley in a friendly, forgiving sort of way, as if to atone for the uneasiness the correction had occasioned him.

"But I never said anything of the sort !" exclaimed Charley, reddening up, as soon as he could get a word in sideways.

"Saving your presence, a *dozen* times," rejoined the little mercurial old gentleman—"a *dozen times at least* !" repeated he, most emphatically. "The fact is, my dear sir, I daresay you write so much, you forget what you say. We readers have better memories. I noted it particularly, for it was the only thing that ever shook my conviction of Pomponius Ego being a very old man. But let that pass. Don't be discouraged. I like your writings, especially the first time over. Few stories bear constant telling ; but you've a wonderful knack of dressing them up.

"My father had a jolly knack at cooking up an almanack,
Yes, he had a jolly knack, at cooking up an almanack.

By the way, *you* once cooked up an almanack ! and a pretty hash it was, too !" added the little old gentleman. "I'll tell you what," continued he, tucking his legs up in his chair, and grasping a knee with each hand ; "I'll tell you what, I'd like to match you against the gentleman that does the cunning advertisements of Rowland's Odonto or Pearl Dentifrice ; I'd lay——"

"Zounds, sir," interrupted Charles.

"Hear me out !" exclaimed the old gentleman. "Hear me out !" repeated he, throwing an arm out on each side of the chair—"I'd match you to lead one further on in an old story, without discovery, than Rowland's man does with his puffs and paste, or whatever his stuff is."



THE MERCURIAL OLD GENTLEMAN.

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"But you are on the wrong scent altogether," roared Charles; "I've nothing to do with Pomponius Ego or Pearl Dentifrice either."

"*Blastation!*" screamed the little old gentleman, jumping up frantically into his chair, with a coffee-cup in one hand and a saucer in the other; "*Blastation!* tell me *that*, when it's written in every feature of your face!" So saying, he sent the cup through the window, and clapped the saucer on his head.

* * * * *

"Come and feed the chuck cocks—pretty chuck cocks," said Aaron, stumping in at the sound of the crash. "Come and feed the chuck cocks—pretty chuck cocks," repeated he soothingly, taking his master down by the arm, and leading him quietly out of the room, observing to Stobbs as they went, "It's your red coat that's raisin' him."

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CHAPTER XXVIII.

"'Bout Lonnun, then, divent ye make sic a rout,
There's nowse there maw winkers to dazzle :
For a' the fine things ye are gobbin' about,
We can marra in canny Newcassel."—PIGG'S POEMS



"Ar's Pigg."

AN ye let us lie i' yere barn, please, canny man?" inquired Pigg of a farmer, at whose door he knocked a long time on the night of this memorable run, before he got him to answer. "Ar's drippin' wet, huss is tired, and hunds can't travel."

"Who are ye?" inquired the farmer, unused to visitors at any time, more particularly after night-fall.

"Ar's Pigg, Squire Jorrock's huntsman," replied James; "we've had a *desperate* run, and canna get

hyem te neet."

"S-o-o-o!" replied the farmer in astonishment. "Here, Mary!" holloaing to his wife; "fetch a light, here be the hounds. And hev ye killed him?" inquired the farmer, looking closer at his visitor.

"Aye, killed him, aye. Ar's gettin' his head i' my pocket—if ye can put your hand in you may get it—ar's see numb ar can de nout."

* * * * *

"Sure-*lie* he's a big un!" exclaimed the farmer, pulling out the head, and weighing it by the ears. "Well, I think!—but

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come, let's get ye put up; it's a tarrible night—not one for standin' out at doors. Here! fetch the lantern, Jane, and help me to put the beast away, so as to make room for the gen'leman's horse;" adding to Pigg, "you are surely very wet?"

Pigg.—"Wet, aye! wet as muck. Ar wish ar may ha' gotten all my hunds away though. If ye can let us have some clean stree i' the barn, wor ard maister 'ill pay ye liberal for 't i' the mornin'—he's quite the gent."

"A! never mind about the pay, we will do what we can for you," replied the farmer. So saying, he led the way with the lantern, and the jaded horse and tired hounds followed on with Pigg.

The farmer's lad took the horse, while Pigg looked over his hounds, and finding only a couple and a half wanting, he shook them down plenty of straw, and returned to the house to see what he could get to feed them on. A tub full of milk, with brown loaves sliced into it, was quickly prepared, but there was little demand for it, the majority of the hounds seeming to prefer a continuance of the rest into which they were quietly subsiding to being disturbed for a meal. At length they had all been coaxed to the pail, and after a hearty shake each nestled into his neighbour, and the pack were soon in a very small compass.

Having seen his horse done up also, Pigg began to turn his attention to himself.

"Sink, but it's wet," said he, giving his cap a dash towards the floor, which sent a shower-bath on to the flags; "however, ar's lucky in gettin' housed at all; for ar really thou'ht ar'd ha' had to lie out like them poor divils at Chobham;" saying which he followed the farmer into an apartment, in which sat his wife and daughters round a fire composed of a little coal and a good deal of rubbish-wood.

"Ar think ar'll gan into the kitchen," observed Pigg, looking at the fire.

"This be the kitchen," replied the farmer's wife, setting him a chair by the fire, thinking he was shy.

Pigg sat down, and after contemplating the fire a few

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seconds, he exclaimed, "Ods wons! but ye keep varry bad fires i' this country."

"Nay, man," replied Mr. Butterfield, his host, "we call that a varra good one."

"Ar doesn't ken what a bad un'll be like, then," rejoined James.

"Well," said Butterfield, throwing on another faggot, "you are welcome to it such as it is. What will you have to eat?"

"Ought ye can give me," said Pigg; "a rasher o' bacon, collops and eggs, or ought," casting his eye up at the flitches and hams hanging from the ceiling, adding, "ar's mortal hungry."

While the rashers of bacon were frying, Butterfield made Pigg exchange his wet coat, waistcoat, and shirt for dry clothes of his own, and adding a cold pork-pie and a flagon of ale to the hot bacon, Pigg was very soon in his glory. Having at length cleared the decks, he again turned to the fire, which, eyeing for some time with critical amazement, he at length exclaimed with a laugh, "Sink, if mar cousin Deavilboger see'd sick a fire i' his kitchen, ar wonder what he'd say!"

"You'll keep good fires in your country, then, I presume?" inquired Mrs. Butterfield.

"Aye, fires, aye!" exclaimed Pigg; "nobody kens what a fire is but them as has been i' wor country."

"Whereabouts is it?" inquired Butterfield, puzzled with his dialect.

Pigg.—"A canny Newcassel, where all the coals come frae. You've never been there, ar's warn'd, or you'd have heard tell o' mar coosin Deavilboger—farms a hundred and nine acres of land aside Kenton. Sink it, frae his loupin' on stane ar's seen all the country side flarin wi' pit loues. Mar cousin's kitchen fire niver gans out frae Krismas to Krismas. A! it is a bonny country! By my *soule*, ar's never been reetly warmed sin ar left the North."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Mrs. Butterfield in astonishment; "your cousin must spend a fortin' i' firin'."

"Deil a bit—coals cost nout; if they did, folks wad warm

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theirsels at the pit heaps. Iv'ry poor man has his shed full o' coals; great blazin' fires to come hyem te at night, a nice singin' hinnie, all ready for slicin' and butterin', swingin' o' the girdle—but ye dinna ken what a girdle is i' this country, ar's warn'd."

"No," replied Mrs. Butterfield; "we don't."

"Why, ye see," said James, "it's a great round, flat iron, broad like, may be three times as big as your hat-crown, with a hoop over the top to hank it on tiv a crook i' the chimley; and then the missis makes a thing like a spice loaf, which she rolls out flat with a rollin'-pin, till it's the size o' the girdle, and about as thick as yeer finger, and then she bakes it on the girdle, and splets it up, and butters it see that the grease runs right down your gob as ye eat it."

"Nay, then!" exclaimed Mrs. Butterfield, "but that will only be for gentle folk?"

Pigg.—"Iv'ry man i' the country has a singin' hinnie of a Saturday night, and many of a Sunday, tee. There wasn't a man on mar cousin Deavilboger's farm but has his fifteen and sixteen shillin' a-week, and some up to twenty."

"Wonderful!" exclaimed Mr. Butterfield, who only paid his eight. "It must be a grand country to live in."

"A, it's a grand country!" repeated Pigg. "Ar's *sure* ar's never been rightly warm sin' I left it. What they call a fire i' the South is nabbut what we wad tak' to light one on with i' the North;" rubbing his wet cords as he spoke. "A, it's a bonny country!—bonny Shiney Raws all about the pits. Ivery man with his pig and his gairden; sweetbriar i' the middle, and poseys round about."

"You must have a drop of gin, and see if that will warm you," rejoined Mr. Butterfield, unlocking a cupboard as he spoke. "Here, Mary, get some glasses, and put the kettle on, and let us have a cheerer to the gentleman's health. It's not every night that brings us a visitor."

A large black bottle of Hollands, labelled "Eye Water," part of a contraband cargo, was fearlessly placed on the table. More wood and coal were added to the fire; the wood crackled

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merrily up the chimney, shedding a cheerful blaze over the family group circled about. One seat of honour was ceded to Pigg, the other was occupied by Mrs. Butterfield, while her two daughters came in between her and their father, who sat in the centre, and the servant lads kept a little in the rear of their master on the left. The servant girl bustled about in the background.

"Help yourself, now," said Mr. Butterfield, passing the bottle and tumbler to Pigg, having poured himself and his wife each out a glass. "Don't be afraid of it; you're heartily welcome, and there's more in the cupboard when you've finished that. Here's your good health! I'm fond of fox-hunters."

"Thank ye," replied Pigg, filling his glass half full of gin, and topping it with hot water. "Ar wish the country was made o' sic chaps as ye; we shouldn't hear se much 'war wheat' then, ar's warn'd ye."

Mr. Butterfield did not catch the latter part of the sentence, or he would have read him a lecture on riding over wheat.

A second half tumbler succeeded the first, and Pigg waxed uncommonly jovial; his eyes twinkled, and his tongue ran riot with all manner of stories, chiefly about hunting, the importance of his cousin Deavilboger, and the magnificence of the town of Newcassel. "Mr. Jorrocks was nothing but a good 'un. If it wasn't for him, he'd never stop i' the South." At the third half tumbler, Deavilboger's farm had grown into nine hundred acres, and Newcassel was bigger than London.

"God sink ar'll sing ye a sang," said he, turning the quid in his mouth. "A! one o' the bonniest sangs that iver was sung—all about a dog o' wor toon, and when ar stamps wi' my foot, ye mun all join chorus. Now ar'll begin:—

"In a town near Newcassel, a pitman did dwell,
Wiv his wife named Peg, a tom-cat, and himsel';
A dog called Cappy, he doated upon,
Because he was left by his great uncle Tom.

Weel bred Cappy, famous au'd Cappy,
Cappy's the dog, Talliho, Talliho!"

"Now, that *last's* chorus," observed Pigg, wiping the tobacco stream from his mouth with his sleeve.

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" His tail pitcher-handled, his colour jet black ;
Just a foot and a half was the length of his back ;
His legs seven inches frer shoulders to paws,
And his lugs like tve dockins, hung owre his jaws.

Hereupon Pigg gave a mighty stamp, and the company joined
in with—

" Weel bred Cappy, famous au'd Cappy,
Cappy's the dog, Talliho, Talliho ! "

" For huntin' of varmin' reet clever was he,
And the house frer a' robbers his bark wad keep free.
Could baith fetch and carry ; could sit on a stool,
Or, when frisky, wad hunt water-rats in a pool.
Weel bred Cappy, &c.

" As Ralphy to market one morn did repair,
In his hatband a pipe, and weel combed was his hair,
Ower his arm hung a basket—thus onwards he speels,
And enter'd Newcassel wi' Cap at his heels.
Weel bred Cappy, &c.

" He hadn't got further than foot of the side,
Afore he fell in with the dog-killin' tribe ;
When a highwayman fellow slipp'd round in a crack,
And a thump o' the skull laid him flat on his back !
Down went Cappy, &c.

" Now Ralphy, *extonish'd*, Cape's fate did repine,
Whilst his eyes like tve little pearl buttons did shine ;
He then spat on his hands, in a fury he grew,
Cries, "'Gad smash ! but ar'l hev settisfaction o' thou,
For knockin' down Cappy,' &c.

" Then this grim-luiken fellow his bludgeon he raised,
When Ralphy eyed Cappy, and then stood amazed ;
But fearin' aside him he might be laid down,
Threw him into the basket, and bang'd out o' town.
Away went Cappy, &c.

" He breathless gat hyem, and when liftin' the sneck,
His wife exclaim'd, ' Ralphy ! thou's suin gettin' back ' ;
' Getten back ! ' replied Ralphy, ' ar wish ar'd ne'er gyen,
In Newcassel they're fellin' dogs, lasses, and men.
They've knocked down Cappy,' &c.

" ' If aw gan to Newcassel, when comes wor pay week,
Ar' liken him again by the patch on his cheek ;
Or if ever he enters wor toon wiv his stick,
We'll thump him about till he's black as au'd Nick,
For killin' au'd Cappy,' &c.

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“ Wiv tears in her een, Peggy heard his sad tale,
And Ralph wiv confusion and terror grew pale,
While Cappy's transactions with grief they talk'd o'er,
He creeps out o' the basket quite brisk on the floor!
Weel done, Cappy!” &c.

Great applause followed, producing another song, “The Keel Row,” after which came another stiff tumbler of gin and water—then another song, or parts of a song rather—for the vocalist was fast becoming *hors de combat*;—his face turned green—his eye gradually glazed, and at length his chin sank on his breast; but for the fortunate circumstance of the farmer's boy being on the look-out, his tumbler would have dropped to the ground. They then carried Mr. Pigg off to bed, but not being able to get off his boots, they happed him up as he was.

The next morning, when Farmer Butterfield came downstairs, he found Pigg on his overnight seat, with his legs cocked over the back of a chair, with one of his boys blacking his boots. He had neither cold nor headache, and ate as much breakfast as if he had had no supper. His coat was dry, his waistcoat was dry, he was all dry together; the sun shone brightly, the lost hounds had cast up and taken shelter in an outhouse, his horse was freshish, and the pack poured out of the barn bright and glossy in their coats, though somewhat stiff in their limbs.

* * * * *

“If evir ye come to Handley Cross, wor ard maister will be glad to thank ye and pay ye,” said Pigg, grasping the farmer's hand as he mounted; “and if evir ye gan to canny Newcassel, cast your eye o'er mar coosin Deavilboger's farm—A! what tormots he has! Aye, and see his grand pedigree bull—A! what a bull he has!”

“You're *heartily* welcome,” replied Farmer Butterfield, shaking Pigg by the hand, “and whenever you pass this way, give us a look in; there'll always be a drop of eye-water in the bottle. Stay, let's open the gate for you;”

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running to the fold-yard from which Pigg emerged with the glad pack at his horse's heels.

Mrs. Butterfield, her daughters and servants, were clustered at the door, to whom Pigg again returned thanks, and touching his cap, trotted down the lane on to the road, the brightness of the morning contrasting with the dark wildness of the hour in which he arrived. What a different place he had got to, to what he thought! On Pigg jogged, now coaxing a weakly hound, now talking to his horse, and now striking up the chorus of—

“Cappy's the dog, Talliho! Talliho!”

* * * * *

“Your master's just gone through,” said Anthony Smith at the Barrow Hill Gate.

“Mar maister!” replied Pigg; “what, Squire Jorrocks?”

“Yeas,” said the man; “he was axing if I could tell him what become of his hounds yesterday.”

“Indeed,” replied Pigg; “give me fourpence and a ticket.”

On Pigg trotted as well as he could with a pack of hounds without a whipper-in, and catching a view of Mr. Jorrocks's broad red back rounding a bend of the road, he gave a puff of his horn that acted like magic.

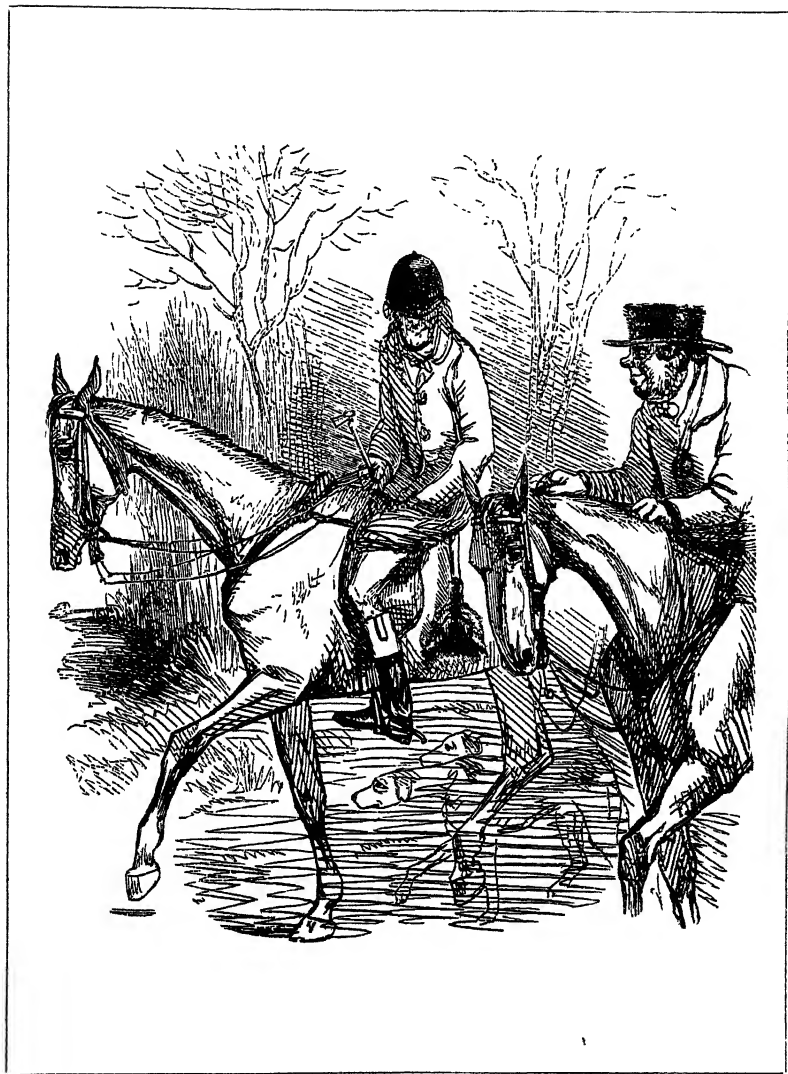
Mr. Jorrocks stopped as though he were shot.

Turning short back, he espied his huntsman and the hounds, and great was the joy and exultation at meeting.

“Killed him, did you say!” exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks, in ecstasies; “*vere's his brush?*”

“A, sink 'em, they'd spoiled it,” replied Pigg, “afore iver I gat te them—but ar's gotten his head i' my pocket!”

“*Fatch it out!*” exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks; “vy, man, you should ride with it at your 'osses' side. Have you never a couple loup to your saddle?—run a bit of vipcord through his snout, and let the world see the wonders we've done—you've no proper pride about you! There now,” continued he, having adjusted the head at Pigg's saddle side, “let the world see it—don't let your coat lap hang over it.”



A BYE ON THE SLY.

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Thus Mr. Jorrocks and Pigg proceeded at a foot's pace, relating their mutual adventures. Before they had got to the end of their stories, who but Charles should pop upon them from a by-road, and the three having got together again, they entered Handley Cross in triumphant procession, as though they had never parted. Rumours of the run had been rife all the morning, but in what direction it had been nobody could tell. The stables and kennel were besieged by inquirers, and Mr. Fribbleton, the man-milliner, who edited the "Paul Pry," having been granted an audience, managed from Mr. Jorrocks's account to manufacture the following article for the second edition of his paper. It was headed—

"BRILLIANT RUN WITH MR. JORROCKS'S HOUNDS!"

and proceeded—

"As this unrivalled pack were taking their daily exercise on the Summerton road, accompanied by the huntsman, their worthy master, and his friend, Mr. James Stobbs, a large dog-fox suddenly crossed before them, with which the pack went away in gallant style, despite all efforts to stop them, as they were advertised to meet at the Round of Beef and Carrots to-morrow. The place the fox so suddenly popped upon them was just at the four-mile-stone, near the junction on the Appledove road, and as there were some coursers on Arthington open fields, it is conjectured bold Reynard, having been suddenly disturbed by the long dogs, had come upon the hounds in a somewhat ruffled state of mind, without dreaming of his danger. However, he was quickly convinced that there was some, by the cry of his redoubtable pursuers, and the shortness of his start caused him to put his best leg foremost; and setting his head for Wollaton Plantations, he went straight as an arrow towards them, passing near the main earths on Thoresby Moor, and going through the low end of the plantations where they run out into a belt.

"Here he was chased by a woodman's dog, and the hounds came to a momentary check; but Mr. Jorrocks, being well up,

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made a scientific cast forward, and getting upon grass, they hit off the scent at a meuse, and went at a racing pace down to Crowland, through Lady Cross Park, leaving Bilson a little on the right, and so on to Langford Plantations, from thence by King's Gate to Hookem-Snivey, and on by Staunton-Snivey to the Downs, crossing at Depedean, leaving the Windmill to the right, and the Smugglers' Cave on the left. Night and a hurricane now came on; but, despite all impediments, this truly gallant pack realised their fox at the foot of Gunston Crag. A few more minutes would have thrown the mantle of protection over the varmint, for the crags are strongholds from whence foxes are seldom or ever dislodged. It was the biggest Reynard that ever was seen, and the tag of his tail was uncommonly large.

"The distance gone over could not have been less than five-and-twenty miles; and altogether it was the very finest run ever encountered in the annals of fox-hunting. Mr. Jorrocks went like a bird, and earned a title to a niche among the crack riders of England.

"The hounds lay out all night, but have arrived at Handley Cross in very fair order; and we trust this run is a prelude to a long career of brilliant sport that we shall have the good fortune to record under the auspices of their most sporting master, and his equally renowned and energetic Scotch huntsman—Charles Pigg."

Mr. Jorrocks wrote the following letter to Bill Bowker:—

"DEAR BOWKER,

"Your's to hand, and note the contents. We've had a *buster*! Three hours without a check and a kill! Should have been 'appy to have sent old 'Nunquam Dormio' an account, but it was a bye on the sly, and no one being out, there are no names to bring in. It's soapin' chaps cleverly wot makes a run read. Howsomever, I hopes to have lots of clippers for him to record before long. Not that I cares about fame, but it's well to let the 'ounds have the credit of what they do.

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You say Dormio will spice the articles up with learning and Latin. Latin be 'anged!—Greek too, if there's any grown nowadays. Now for the run.

"It's an old sayin', and a true 'un, that a bad beginnin' often makes a good endin'. We lost Binjamin at startin'; the little beggar was caught in the spikes of a po-chay, and carried a stage out of town—teach him to walk up street for futur'. Howsomever, off we set without him, and a tremendous run was the result. I send you the 'Pry,' and you can judge for yourself; the first part, about the find, must be taken 'cum grano salis,' with a *leetle* Quieanne pepper, as Pomponius Ego would say. We meant to have a private rehearsal as it were, and got a five-act comedy instead of a three. Indeed, it were like to have been a tragedy.

"Somehow or other I got to the Earl of Bramber's, where there was a great spread, and I had a good blow-out and a solemnish drink. Either I walked in my sleep and fell into a pond or some one pitched me into one, and I was as near drowned as a toucher. Howsomever, I got out, and werry attentive people were to me, givin' me brandy, and whiskey, and negus, and all sorts of things. I slept pretty well after it, nevertheless; but when I awoke to get up, I seemed to be in quite a different room—no bell, no lookin'-glass, no wash-hand, no towels, no nothin', but my 'unting clothes were laid nice and orderly. I dressed, and found my way to the breakfast-room, when sich a roar of laughter greeted my entrance! Still, they were all werry purlite; but I observed whenever a servant came in he nearly split his sides with laughin'. Well, jist as I was goin' away, I caught a sight of myself in a glass, and, oh, crikey! my face was painted broad red and yellow stripes, zebra-fashion! I couldn't be angry, for it was so werry well done; but it certainly was werry disrespectful to an M. F. H. Have no great fancy for lords—werry apt to make first a towel, and then a dish-clout on one. But enough of that.

"I hope the Slender has not been silly enough to shoot an exciseman; they are clearly not game. It will be hawkward for them both if he has; of course he has too many legal friends

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not to get the best advice. I'm sorry to hear about Susan's legs—they were a pair of uncommon neat ones, certainlie; all the symmetry of Westris's, without the smallness. I don't think blisterin' would do them any good; rest—rest—with occasional friction: hand-rubbin', in fact, is the best thing.

“Charley's quite well, and slept last night at a lunatic's, a poor chap wot went mad about 'unting. You needn't send him none of your nasty 'baccy down here, for I don't stand smokin'. As you say Snarle's business has fallen off, you'll have fewer common forms to copy, and more time for letter-writing. Tip us a stave when you've nothin' to do, and believe me yours to serve,

“JOHN JORROCKS.

“P.S. 1. I enclose you 5*l.* for the Slender. Tell him to buy a good hard-mouthed counsel with it. I fear Billy's only a ‘*lulus naturæ*,’ or ‘loose ‘un by natur’,’ as Pomponius would say.
“J. J.”

“P.S. 2. Tell Fortnum and Mason to send me a dozen pots of marmeylad; also Gilbertson to send me three quartern loaves—two brown and a wite—every other day. Can't get sich bread as his 'ere, and neither Alum nor Branfoote subscribe a dump to the 'ounds, so it's no use puzzenin' oneself on their account. Also see Painter, and tell him if his turtle's first chop, to send me six quarts, with a suitable quantity of punch.
“J. J.”

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CHAPTER XXIX.

COOKING UP A HUNT DINNER.



APTAIN DOLEFUL, ever anxious for the prosperity of the town and his own emolument, conceived that a hunt dinner on the night of his ball would have the effect of drawing divers rural parties to the town who might not otherwise honour him with their presence, and he lost no time in communicating the idea to the worthy master, Mr. Jorrocks.

Of course the *éclat* it would confer on the hunt, and the brilliancy it would reflect on Mr. Jorrocks's mastership, were the main points Captain Doleful urged on behalf of his proposal; and Mr. Jorrocks, nothing loth to indulge in a good dinner, at which he was to play first fiddle, readily came into the proposition, and the following notice was inserted in the "Paul Pry":—

"MR. JORROCKS'S FOX HOUNDS!

"There will be a HUNT DINNER, at the Dragon Hotel, on the night of the Master of the Ceremonies' Ball, at which Members of the Hunt and the public in general are invited to attend.

"MR. JORROCKS IN THE CHAIR!

"Tickets, twelve shillings each, to be had at the bar of the Dragon Hotel up to five o'clock on Monday evening, after which none can possibly be issued."

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Never was a happier device, or one more eminently successful. Not only did the visitors of the place hasten to secure tickets, but people from all the neighbouring towns showered in their orders by the post, and it soon became apparent that a bumper would be the result. The longest long room at the Dragon was soon declared inefficient for the accommodation of the party, and the masons and joiners were summoned to lay the adjoining bedroom to the end, which would afterwards be restored to privacy by the usual means of folding-doors. Then came the joining and fitting of tables, the measuring of cloths, the borrowing of knives, forks, glasses, salt-cellars, decanters, and waiters. Captain Doleful flew about the town like a lost dog in search of its master. When Mr. Snubbins, the landlord of the Dragon, failed in accomplishing a loan, the Captain exerted his authority in compelling one. What with his ball and the dinner he scarcely had time for his meals.

On the Monday he bespoke an audience with Mr. Jorrocks to put the finishing stroke to his arrangements. He was duly received in the dining-room of Diana Villa, where pens, ink, and paper were laid for his coming. The dinner, he assured the worthy master, was calculated to make him eminent in the eyes of all men, and most materially to aid the financial department of the hunt. "There will be," said he, "a gathering from all quarters. Men from every point—sportsmen of every shade and grade are about to assemble, and if you can manage to tickle the fancy of each with a speech, so as to make him believe his favourite sport is the best, there is no saying but in the happy mood that most men are in when pleased and half drunk, you may draw a good many into becoming members or subscribing."

"Well, there can be no difficulty whatsoever at all," replied Mr. Jorrocks, "in making them a werry 'andsome speech—beautiful speech, I may say, but in course they can't expect me to tell them that I consider any sport better than 'unting."

"Why, as to that," rejoined Captain Doleful, "it makes little odds what a man says on an occasion of this sort, especially a chairman, whose first care should be to put every one

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in good humour with himself; and if you were to outstep the real facts a little for once, no one would ever think of throwing it in your teeth on a future occasion. For instance now, Captain Couples, the great courser, has written for tickets for three,—himself, his son, and a friend,—in order that he may have the honour of making your acquaintance, and then of presenting his son in due form. Of course you will take an early opportunity during the evening of buttering him by introducing as a toast the beautiful sport of coursing, which you may say is one of the most classical and elegant of field-sports, and say that it is one which you feel a peculiar pleasure in proposing, inasmuch as you have been given to understand that one of the most distinguished patrons of the leash has honoured the Handley Cross Hunt dinner with his presence, which affords you an opportunity of coupling with the sport the name of the gallant Captain Couples, and of course the toast will be responded to with a heavy round of cheers, which will lay the Captain open to the insinuating applications of Mr. Fleeceall, and you may reckon him, if not his son also, a member of your hunt for a year at all events, especially if you get him to pay the money down on the nail.”

“Humph!” said Mr. Jorrocks, turning it over in his mind whether he could do such violence to his feelings as to praise the sport of coursing, or call it *sport* at all, for the sake of the three sovereigns he would get by Captain Couples becoming a member of the hunt. Nothing daunted, Captain Doleful proceeded with his enumeration and recommendations. “Mr. Trippitt, the famous cricketer, will most likely come. He was the founder of the Winwicket Cricket Club, which beat all London at Lord’s the year before last; you should toast him and his club together, and of course you would string a lot of sentences together in praise of the game of cricket, which you are doubtless aware is most popular all over England. Then there is Mr. Ringmore, the quoit-player, and loads of people who keep some hobby or other for their private riding, who should all be toasted in turn.”

“Werry well,” said Mr. Jorrocks, “werry well, there cannot

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be not never no objection whatsoever at all to saying some-thin' pleasant and soapy of all the wariuous amusements, but it is werry difficult and inconvenient to have so many cut and dried speeches, as well as one's dinner aboard at the same time. If I could manage to couple two or three of them together, such as coursin', fishin', and fiddlin', for instance, it would suit my constitution better."

"Oh no! that would not do," replied Captain Doleful, "because one of the objects in singling out a sport or diversion to give as a toast is the circumstance of some patron or follower being at table, who will make a speech in reply; but if you club two or three together, not only will you fail in getting any one to consider the toast as a compliment, but no one will rise to acknowledge it; because, though he may be a keen follower of one branch of sport, he may care nothing about the thing you couple with it—You understand?"

"Then we must jest dot down wot we think should be given," observed Mr. Jorrock, "and also wot I should say, for it is far more than probable, indeed I should say most likely, that in the heat and noise, and lush and flush, and one thing and another, I shall forget one half o' the toast, and possibly give the coursin' man to the fiddlin' feller, or the cricketer instead of the quoit-player." Thereupon Mr. Jorrock took pen, ink, and paper, and proceeded to draw out his list of toasts.

"In course, 'the Queen, and her stag 'ounds,' will come first," observed he, writing the words at the head of a long slip of paper—adding, "bumper toast. Cheers. Do you think there will be any staggerin' sinner there to acknowledge the toast?"

"Probably there will," replied the Captain, "at all events, if there isn't, I would say a few words in return, as it would not look well to let the toast pass without saying something on behalf of our young and virtuous queen. I can acknowledge it as Vice-president, and also as holding her Majesty's commission."

"Well, then," said Mr. Jorrock, "let's see what should come next? Shouldn't it be the 'Andley Cross Fox-'ounds, and my werry good health?"

"No—that will be too soon. The Chairman's health should

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never be given until the company have had a few glasses of wine to elate them for shouting. Besides, your health will be the toast of the evening, and things always become flat after that is given, and perhaps the company will begin to disperse."

"Werry well—anything for a quiet life—what shall we put then?"

Captain Doleful.—"Prince Albert, to be sure! and his harriers."

"With all my 'eart," replied Mr. Jorrocks, placing the Prince's name after her Majesty's.

"We must have the Prince of Whales next, in course," observed our master, "and all the rest of the Royal family," putting it down, and asking the Captain what should follow.

"Mr. Strider, the great racing man of these parts, will most likely come; and if so, you should give the Turf," observed Captain Doleful. "Besides, he is a very likely man to become a member of the hunt, if not to subscribe, now that there is a regular master, his only excuse for not doing so when the committee had the hounds being that he didn't like partnership concerns in any thing but racehorses."

"The Turf, and Mr. Strider's good health!" Mr. Jorrocks wrote down—adding the words—"improve breed of 'osses—promote sport—amuse lower orders—mount cavalry—lick the world," as the headings for his speech.

"Come now, jog on," said Mr. Jorrocks, looking at the nib of his pen, we've only got five toasts ready as yet: shouldn't we give 'Fox-'unting'?"

"Oh, certainly," replied Captain Doleful; "that is a general toast, and acceptable to all; besides, Mr. Yarnley will be at the dinner," observed Captain Doleful. "He has two capital covers, and one capital speech, which he likes letting off. Write down 'Mr. Yarnley, and Promoters of Fox-hunting,' for he doesn't hunt himself, and only preserves foxes in order that he may have his health drunk at ordinaries and public dinners when he tells the company how he has always preserved foxes, and does preserve foxes, and will preserve foxes, and so forth."

Mr. Jorrocks then added Mr. Yarnley's name to the list of toasts, adding the words, "proprietors of covers and promoters

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of fox-'unting," and the following headings for a speech, "Considerate gentleman—free from selfishness—good example." "We should cheer this toast, I think," added Mr. Jorrocks, "specially as I s'pose the gemman takes no rent for his covers."

"I believe not," replied Captain Doleful, upon which Mr. Jorrocks put the word "cheers" after "good example."

"Now, 'Coursing' should come, I think," remarked Captain Doleful, and Captain Couple's health. He's a great man at the Deptford meeting, and thinks coursing the only sport worth living for."

"He must be a werry big blockhead, then," replied Mr. Jorrocks, laying down his pen, and stretching out his legs as though he were going to take "the rest." "A werry remarkable jackass, indeed, I should say. Now of all slow, starvation, great-coat, comforter, worsted-stockin', dirty-nose sort of amusement, that same melancholy coursin' is to me the most miserably contemptible. It's a satire on racin'."

"Never mind," said Captain Doleful, "Couples's guineas will be as good as any other man's; and, as I said before, a chairman is not expected to swear to all he says—your business is to endeavour to please every one, so that they may go home and tell their wives and daughters what a jolly, delightful, at-all-in-the-ring sort of gentleman Mr. Jorrocks is."

"Aye, that's all werry good," grunted our master, "but conscience is conscience arter all, and coursin' is coursin'. It's as bad as drinkin' the 'Andley Cross waters to have to praise what one doesn't like. I'll give the 'Merry 'Arriers' afore 'Coursin',' howsomever," said Mr. Jorrocks, putting down the words "Hare-'unting." "Will there be any currant-jelly boy to return thanks?—I'm sure there will, indeed, for I never knew a mixed party yet without a master of muggers among them."

To this toast Mr. Jorrocks added the words—"nose—fine music—pleasant—soup." "Now," said he, "we've got the 'Queen and the Staggers'—'Prince Halbert'—'Prince of Whales'—'Strider and the Turf'—'Fox-'unting'—'Yarnley and Proprietors of Covers'—'The Merry 'Arriers.'"

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"Put 'Coursing' next, then," said Doleful; "it will follow hare-hunting very well, and be all in the soup line."

"Well, if you must have it, you must," replied Mr. Jorrocks, writing down the word "Coursin'." "Who acknowledges the toast?—ah, Couples—*Captain*, I think you said he is? Captain Couples—a werry good man, too,—blow me tight though if I knows what to say in givin' on it."

"Oh, say it's classical, and a fine bracing amusement." Mr. Jorrocks added the words, "fine amusement."

"Well, that's eight bumpers from the chair," observed Captain Doleful; "and now we'll let you take your breath a little—unless Mr. Snapper comes, when you must give pigeon-shooting and the triggers generally. I'll now toast 'The Chair.'"

"The Chair," wrote Mr. Jorrocks; "that's me. Cheers, in course."

"In course," replied Captain Doleful, adding, "I shall butter you uncommon."

"With all my 'eart—I can stand a wast of praise," replied Mr. Jorrocks.

"Well, then, after that, and after your speech, which of course will be highly complimentary to the company, and full of promises of what you will do, you must propose my health—as master of the ceremonies of Handley Cross Spa."

"And as a great sportsman," added Mr. Jorrocks.

"No, no, I'd rather not," exclaimed Doleful in alarm; "the fact is, I only hunt on the sly. If the Dowagers thought I did not devote my whole time and energies to the town amusements, they would grumble, and say I was always out hunting instead of attending to the important duties of my post. No; just confine yourself to the M.C. department, not forgetting to insinuate that it is my ball-night, and to express a hope that all the company will honour it with their presence; you might say something, apparently half facetiously, in the way of a hint about giving guineas for their tickets; for some people are getting into the dirty trick of paying at the door."

"Werry good," said Mr. Jorrocks, writing down "Capt. Doleful, M.C., not sportsman—pleasant feller—nice ball—

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pumps in pocket—tickets at bar—guinea.” “You’ll be ‘cheer’d,’ I s’pose?”

“Of course,” said the Captain—“all the honours—one cheer more if you can get it.”

Cricketing, quoit-playing, shooting, badger-baiting, steeple-chasing, hurdle-racing, crow-shooting, and divers other sporting, extraordinary, and extravagant toasts were then added; some to fit people that were known to be coming, others put down to take the chance of any amateur of the amusement presenting himself unexpectedly at the table.

“Werry well, now,” said Mr. Jorrocks at last, dotting up the column of toasts with his pen, “that’s two, four, six, seven, eight, ten, twelve, fourteen, sixteen. Sixteen bumper toasts, with speeches both goin’ and returnin’, to say nothin’ of shoutin’, which always tells on weak ’eads. Wot shall we say next?”

“Oh!” said Captain Doleful, in an indifferent sort of way, as much as to say the important business of the evening would be finished on drinking his health; “why, just pass the bottle a few times, or if you see a gentleman with a singing face, call on him for a song; or address your neighbour right or left, and say you’ll trouble him to give ‘A gentleman and his hounds.’”

“‘A gen’leman and his ’ounds,’” said Mr. Jorrocks; “but they’ll have had a gen’leman and his ’ounds when they’ve had me.”

“Ah, but that’s nothing—‘A gentleman and his hounds’ is a fine serviceable toast at a hunt dinner. I’ve known ‘A gentleman and his hounds’—‘A gentleman and his hounds’—‘A gentleman and his hounds’—serve chairman, vice-chairman, and company throughout the livelong evening, without the slightest assistance from any other source. Fox-hunters are easily pleased, if you do but give them plenty to drink. Let me, however, entreat of you, above all things, to remember my ball, and do not let them oversit the thing so as not to get to it. Remember, too, it’s a fancy one, and they’ll take more dressing.”

“Aye, aye, I’ll vip them off to you when I think they’ve had enough,” replied Mr. Jorrocks.

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CHAPTER XXX.

SERVING UP A HUNT DINNER.



Sucking-pig!

THE important night drew on, and with it the cares and excitement of a double event. The interests of all hearts and minds were centred in that day. None looked beyond. The dinner and dance formed the boundary of their mental horizon. At an early hour in the afternoon numerous rural vehicles came jingling into Handley Cross, with the mud

of many counties on their wheels. Here was Squire Jorum's, the chairman of quarter sessions, green chariot, with fat Mrs. Jorum and three fat little Miss Jorums crammed inside, young Mr. Jorum having established himself alongside a very antediluvian-looking coachman in dark drab, with a tarnished gold band on a new hat, who vainly plied the thong and crop of a substantial half pig-driver, half horse-breaker's whip, along the ribs and hindquarters of a pair of very fat, square-tailed, heavy, rough-coated, coarse-headed, lumbering nags, to induce them to trot becomingly into the town. Imperials, a cap-box, a maid in the rumble, all ensconced in bandboxes, proclaim their destiny for that day. Captain Slasher, with a hired

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barouche and four black screws, all jibbing and pulling different ways—the barouche full of miscellaneous foot cornets in plain clothes (full of creases, of course)—dashes down East Street, and nearly scatters his cargo over the road by cutting it fine between Squire Jorum's carriage and the post. A yellow dennet passes by, picked out with chalk, mud, and black stripes: two polar bear-looking gentlemen, in enormous pea-jackets, plentifully bepocketed, with large wooden buttons, are smoking cigars and driving with a cane-handled hunting whip. Then a "yellow," with the driver sitting on the cross-bar, whose contents, beyond a bonnet and a hat, are invisible, in consequence of the window having more wood than glass in its composition, works its way up, and in its turn is succeeded by another private carriage with a pair of posters.

Then there was such a ringing of bells, calling of waiters, cursing of chambermaids, and blasting of boots at the various hotels, in consequence of the inability of the houses to swell themselves into three times their size to accommodate the extraordinary influx of guests. "Very sorry, indeed," says Mr. Snubbins, the landlord of the Dragon, twisting a dirty duster round his thumb, "Very sorry, indeed, sir," speaking to a red-faced, big-whiskered head thrust out of a carriage window, "we are full to the attics—not a shakedown or sofa unoccupied; can get you a nice lodging out if you like—very comfortable."

"D—— your comfortables, you lying thief!—Do you suppose I can't do that for myself? Well, if ever you catch me coming to your house again I hope I may be ——" The wish was lost by some one pulling the irate gentleman back into his chaise, and, after a short parley inside, during which three reasonable single gentlemen applied to Mr. Stubbins for the accommodation of a room amongst them to dress in for dinner, the boy was ordered to drive on, and make the grand tour of the inns.

Weary, most weary were the doings at the Dragon. *Ring a ding, ding a ding dong*, went the hostler's bell at the gate; "Room for a carriage and pair?"

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“Whose o’ it?”

“Mrs. Grout’s.”

“No, quite full!” The hostler muttering to himself, “Mrs. Grouts and two feeds—sixpence for hostler.” *Ring a ding, ding a ding, ding a ding dong.* Hostler again—“Coming out!” “Who now?” “Squire Gooseander! four posters, piping hot, white lather, boys beery, four on to Hollinshall, bait there, back to hall—sixpence a mile for good driving—out they come—there’s your ticket—pay back and away.”

Tinkle, tinkle, tinkle, tinkle, tinkle, tinkle, tinkle, went a little bell, as though it would never stop.

“WAITER!” roared a voice from the top of the house, that came like a crash of thunder after the insignificant precursor, “am I to ring here all day? Where’s the boots? I sent him for a barber an hour ago, and here I’ve been starving in my shirt-sleeves ever since.”

“Now, Jane, Miss Tramp wants her shoes.”

“Where’s the chambermaid?” exclaimed a gentleman, rushing half frantic downstairs. “Here’s a man got into my room and swears he *will* dress in it.”

“Oh! I begs pardon, sir,” replied the chambermaid, trying to smooth him over, “we really are *so full*, sir, and I didn’t think you’d be coming in so soon, sir.”

“Waiter! somebody has changed my place at dinner! I was next Mr. Walter Dale, and now they’ve put me below Mr. Barker—between him and Mr. Alcock: who the devil’s done it?”

“Boots! Porter! Boots! Run down to Mr. Ingledew, the tailor’s—you know him, don’t you?—corner of Hill Street, just as you turn off the esplanade—and tell him he’s sent me the wrong coat, not half the size of my own—more like a strait-jacket than anything else. And here! Desire Mrs. Kirton to send some ball gloves for me to try on—lemon colour or white—three-and-sixpenny ones.”

“Lauk, I’ve come away and left Miss Eliza’s stockings, I do declare,” exclaims Jemima Thirlwell, Miss Eliza Rippon’s lady’s maid, pale with fear. “What *shall* I do? Never was

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anything so unlucky—just took them to run my hand through and see they were all right, and left them hanging over the back of the chair. Know as well where they are as possible—but what's the use of that when they are ten miles off?"

"Waiter, what time's dinner?"

"Five o'clock, sir, and no waiting—Mr. Jorrocks swears he'll take the chair at five precisely, whether it's served or not," adds the waiter with a grin.

Then there was such work in the kitchen—Susan Straker, the cook, like all the sisterhood, was short in her temper, and severe and endless were the trials it underwent in consequence of the jingling and tinkling of the bells calling away the chambermaids who were to have assisted her in the kitchen. Then Mr. Jorrocks deranged her whole system by insisting upon having a sucking pig and roast goose, that she intended for centre dishes, right under his nose at the top of the table; added to which, the fish was late in coming, and there was not half as much macaroni in the town as would make an inn dish.

"Now, Jun," said Mrs. Jorrocks to her loving spouse, taking a finishing look of our hero as he emerged from his bedroom in the full dress uniform of his hunt, "see and conduct yourself like a gen'leman and with dignity, and, above all, keep *sober*—nothing so vulgar or ungenteel as gettin' intosticated. Belinda and I will call for you at ten minutes before ten, to take you on to the ball; for, in course, it carn't commence till we come, and it won't be politeful to keep people waiting too long."

"Jest so," replied Mr. Jorrocks, adjusting a capacious shirt-frill in the glass. "Binjamin, I say, run and fetch the fly."

Mr. Jorrocks was uncommonly smart. Sky-blue coat lined with pink satin, finely starched white waistcoat, new canary-coloured shorts, below which stood a pair of splendid calves, encased in gauze white silk stockings, and his feet appeared in shining shoes with silver buckles. At either knee a profusion of white riband dangled in graceful elegance, looking for all the world like wedding favours. Benjamin, notwithstanding his boasting and taunting to Samuel Strong, knew his master too well, and the taste of his whip also, to attempt any of the

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exclusive tricks in the way of service he gave himself credit for acting ; so settling himself into his frock-coat, and drawing on a pair of clean white Berlins, sufficiently long at the fingers to allow the ends to dribble in the soup-plates, he wiped his nose across his hand, and running away down to the stand, very soon had a fly at the door. Jorrocks stepped in, and Benjamin mounted behind with all the dignity of a seven-foot figure footman. Away they dash to the Dragon.

Notwithstanding the descent of a drizzling rain, and the "inclement season of the year," as newspapers phrase it, there was a crowd of servants, postboys, beggars and loiterers hanging about the arched gateway of the Dragon to get a sight of our renowned hero alighting from his fly ; and great was the rushing and jostling to the door as it drew up. Mr. Snubbins, the landlord, a choleric round-faced little man, with a snub nose and a pimple on the end of it, had put himself into a white waistcoat, with his best blue coat and black kerseymere shorts, to officiate behind Mr. Jorrocks's chair, and hearing our master's name bandied about on his arrival, met him at the foot of the stairs with all becoming respect, and proceeded to conduct him to the waiting-room. There was a strongish muster ; but two melancholy mould-candles, in kitchen candlesticks, placed on the centre of a large table, shed such a dismal ray about the room, that little was distinguishable, save a considerable mass of white, and an equally large proportion of a darker colour. Some thirty or forty members of the hunt, strangers and others, were clustered about, and there was a dull funeral sort of hum of a conversation, interrupted every now and then by the recognition of friends, and the entrance of another arrival into the dingy apartment. Then there was the usual hiding of hats and cloaks—the secretion of umbrellas, goloshes, and sticks, and the expression of hopes that they might be forthcoming when wanted.

Meanwhile the savoury smell of dinner fighting its way up the crowded staircase in the custody of divers very long-coated postboys turned waiters, and a most heterogeneous lot of private servants, some in top-boots, some in gaiters, some few

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in white cotton stockings, and the most out-of-the-way fitting liveries, entered the waiting-room, and the company began to prepare for the rush. All things, soup, fish, joints, vegetables, poultry, pastry and game, being at length adjusted, and the covers taken off to allow them to cool, Mr. Snubbins borrowed a candle from the lower end of the table, and forthwith proceeded to inform Mr. Jorrocks that dinner was served.

Great was the rush! The worthy citizen was carried out of the waiting-room across the landing, and half-way up the dining-room, before he could recover his legs, and he scrambled to his seat at the head of the table, amidst loud cries of "Sir, this is my seat! Waiter, take this person out."—"Who are you?"—"You're another!"—"Mind your eye!"—"I *will* be here!"—"I say you won't, though!"—"That's my bread!"

Parties at length get wedged in. The clamour gradually subsides into an universal clatter of plates, knives and forks, occasionally diversified by the exclamation of "*Waiter!*" or, "Sir, I'll be happy to take wine with you." Harmony gradually returns as the dinner progresses, and ere the chopped cheese makes its appearance, the whole party is in excellent humour. Grace follows cheese, and the "feast of reason" being over, the table is cleared for the "flow of soul."

A long web of green baize, occasionally interrupted by the inequalities of the various tables, succeeds, and clean glasses with replenished decanters and biscuit-plates, for they do not sport dessert, are scattered at intervals along the surface. The last waiter at length takes his departure, and eyes begin to turn towards the chair.

"Mr. Wice!" roars Mr. Jorrocks, rising, and hitting the table with an auctioneer's hammer, "Mr. Wice-President, I say!" he repeats in a louder and more authoritative tone, amid cries of "Chair! chair! order! order! silence! silence!" "I rises," says he, looking especially important, "to propose a toast, a bumper toast in fact, that I feels confident you will all drink with werry 'earty satisfaction—it is the health of our young, wirtuous, and amiable Queen (applause), a werry proper toast to give at a great sportin' dinner like this, seein' as how

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she is a werry nice little 'ooman, and keeps a pack of stag-'ounds. Gentlemen, I need not tell you that stag-'unting is a sport of great hantiquity, as the curiosity shopkeepers say; but they couldn't do it in nothin' like the style in former days that they do now, so in that respects we have the better of the old hancients. Who hasn't seen Frank Grant's grand pictor of the meet of the stag-'ounds on Hascot 'Eath? That will tell you how it's done now—French polish, blue satin ties, such as Esau never could sport. That's a pictor, my bouys, and when I've 'unted your country to the satisfaction of you all, as I've no manner of doubt at all that I shall, then you subscribe and get Frank to paint me and my 'ounds. And now for the toast," added Mr. Jorrocks, raising a brimming bumper high in hand: "The Queen and her Stag-'ounds!" (Drank with a full and heavy round of applause.) After resuming his seat for a few seconds, during which time he conned the next toast in his mind, Mr. Jorrocks rose and called for another bumper, just as Captain Doleful was rising to return thanks on behalf of her Majesty.

"Mr. Wice!" he roared out, "I rise to propose another bumper toast, as big a bumper as the last in fact, and one that I feel conwincid you will all be most 'appy to drink. We have just had the honour of drinking the health of the Queen; there is one near and dear to her Majesty, who, I feels assured, you will not be the less delighted to honour. (Applause.) I need not say that I alludes to the great patron o' the Woods and Forests, Prince Halbert, the best-looking man i' the country." (Drank with immense applause—one cheer more—HUZZAH!)

Mr. Jorrocks being an expert chairman, from frequent practice at "free-and-easys," went on pretty briskly at starting, and the company had hardly drained their glasses, and got settled after cheering, before his hammer was at work again, and he called for another bumper toast.

Having given "The Prince of Whales," as he called him, and "the rest of the Royal Family," "Gentlemen," said he, rising, glass in hand, "I have now to propose to your favourable consideration an important branch o' British diversion, and

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one for which this country long has, and ever will, stand most howdaciouſly conspicuous. (Cheers.) I allude to the noble ſport of racin'." ("Hear, hear, hear," from Mr. Strider, and a ſlight jingling of glaſſes from friends in his neighbourhood.) "Gentlemen, racin' is a ſport of great hantiquity, ſo old, in fact, that I can't go back to the time when it commenced. It is owin' to racin' and the turf, that we now poſſeſs our ſuperior breed of 'oſſes, who not only amuſe the poor people wot can't afford to hunt, by their runnin', but ſo improve our breed of cavalry, as enables us to lick the world. (Cheers.) I am ſure, gentlemen, you will all agree that racin' is one of the nobleſt and moſt delightful ſports goin', and honoured as we are, this evenin', by the preſence of one of the brighteſt hornaments o' the Britiſh turf" (Mr. Jorrocks looked moſt inſinuatingly down the table at Strider, as much as to ſay "That will do you, my boy") "I feels aſſured I need only couple with the turf the popular name of Strider (loud cheers), to inſure a burſt of hearty and enthuſiaſtic applauſe." Jorrocks was right in his ſurmise, for no ſooner was the name pronounced than there was ſuch a thumping of the baize-covered tables, ſuch a kicking of the floor, and ſuch a ſhoutin' and clapping of hands, that the concluding words of his ſpeech were audible only to the reporter, who was accommodated with a ſmall round table and a large bottle of port immediately behind the chair.

Strider was rightly named Strider, for he was an immenſely tall, teleſcopic kind of man, ſo tall, that he might paſs for the author of Longfellow's poems, who now drew himſelf out from under the table as though he was never going to end. He had a frightful ſquint, ſo that when meant to look at the chair, one eye appeared ſettled half-way down the table, and the other ſeemed to reſt upon the ceiling. He was dreſſed in a round, racing, cut-away coat, with baſket buttons, drab trousers, and a buff waſtcoat, with a ſtriped neckcloth. He had made money by racing—if honeſtly, he was a much belied man—but as he ſpent it freely, and not one man in a hundred cares to aſk how it comes, Strider was popular in his neighbourhood.

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“ He felt deeply sensible of the honour that had been done him by their distinguished chairman and that great meeting, not only by the manner in which his health had been proposed, but for the handsome compliment that had been paid to the great national and all-enjoyable sport of racing, which he felt assured required no recommendation from him, as no one could partake of it once without being fully convinced of its infinite superiority and worth. He was happy to see that his humble exertions in the great and good cause had not been altogether thrown away for, in the list of races for next year, he saw many names that had never been put down before, and having now got a master of hounds whose name was closely associated with everything that was sporting and popular, he made no doubt things would proceed in a true railway style of progression, and the name of Jorrocks would be followed by every well-wisher to that noble animal, the horse. The list of Hashem races for the next year he would take the liberty of handing up to the chair,” producing, as he spoke, a long, half-printed, half-manuscript sheet from his coat-pocket, “and, in conclusion, he had only to repeat his most grateful thanks for the very distinguished honour they had conferred upon him.”

Thereupon three-quarters of the orator disappeared under the table—the list passed quickly up, for no one ventured to look at it, lest a subscription should be inferred, and on its reaching the president he very coolly folded it up and put it in his pocket. Mr. Strider looked all ways except straight at Mr. Jorrocks, who very complacently proceeded with his list of toasts. “Gentlemen,” cried he, getting up again, “Mr. Vice-President and gentlemen!” he exclaimed; “the next toast is one that I feels assured you will drink with werry great satisfaction, and in a full bumper, with all the honours—it is the health of a gentleman now present, who, though no fox-’unter himself—the more’s the pity—is nevertheless a real friend to the sport, and not one of your selfish warmints wot destroys foxes because he does not care about Talli-hoing himself, but, with most trumpish consideration, does his best to promote the sport of his friends and neighbours, thereby settin’ an example worthy

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of imitation by all, both great and small (cheers). When I say it's the health of a gentleman wot gives a brace of covers, free gratis, all for nothin', to our 'unt, your percussion imaginations will readily supply the name of Yarnley (loud applause); and I propose we drink in a full bumper the health of Mr. Yarnley, and proprietors of covers, and promoters of fox-'unting." This toast was drunk with very great applause, and some seconds elapsed before silence was restored. Mr. Yarnley then rose.

He, too, was a tallish man, but coming after Strider he looked less than he really was, added to which, a frock-coat (sky-blue, with pink lining) rather detracted from his height; his face was long and red, his nose very short and thick, and his hair very straight. "Mr. President and gentlemen!" said he, very slowly, fixing his eyes steadily on a biscuit-plate before him, "for the honour you have done me—hem—in drinking my health—hem—I beg—hem—to return you—hem—my most sincere thanks—hem—and gentlemen, I can only say—hem—that I have always been a friend—hem—to fox-'unting—hem (cheers)—and I always shall be a friend to fox-'unting, gentlemen (cheers)—which I am sure is a most agreeable sport (cheers)—heem, hm—and, gentlemen, I hope you will always find foxes in my covers—hem (applause)—for I can only say, gentlemen, that I do preserve foxes, gentlemen—hem (renewed applause)—and I always have preserved foxes, gentlemen—hem, hem——" when Yarnley, seeming about brought up, the company cheered, and drinking off his heel-taps, he concluded with saying, "and, gentlemen, I always *will* preserve foxes!"

"Mr. Wice-President," roared Mr. Jorrocks, above the clamour that now began to prevail, as tongues became loosened with the juice of the grape, "Mr. Wice-President, having drank the first of all sports, let us not forget another werry pleasant branch of 'unting that many delight in who cannot partake of the other, and which is useful as well as pleasant, I mean 'are-'unting; it is a werry nice lady-like amusement; and though we had no 'are-soup at dinner, I makes no doubt

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we have some werry keen 'are-unters at table for all that. I begs to give you "'Are-'unting, and the merry Dotfield 'Arriers.'"

While Mr. Jorrocks was delivering himself of this eloquence an evident uneasiness prevailed among divers fat, ruddy-faced members of the Dotfield hunt, chiefly dressed in single-breasted green coats, with bright buttons, and drab breeches, with woollen stockings, who were scattered among the company, as to who should acknowledge the honour that was done their calling, and gradually they turned to a sportsman near Mr. Jorrocks, one of the many masters who, bolder than the rest, returned thanks in a dribbling, cold-hunting sort of speech, while some dozen stood up to signify their approbation of the sentiments of the speaker, and their sense of the honour that had been individually done them.

Coursing followed hare-hunting, according to previous arrangement, which Mr. Jorrocks described as a fine useful sport, and expatiated largely on the merits of "'are-soup" and "jugged 'are."

Captain Couples briefly acknowledged the honour.

Doleful now began twisting his face into a variety of contortions as the time approached for him to let off his cut-and-dried speech. He had it in notes under his biscuit-plate, at least all the long words he was likely to forget, and now was the time for pouring them upon the company. "Gentlemen!" said he, in a shrill, penny-trumpet sort of voice, hitting the table with his knuckles. "Gentlemen!" he repeated, without drawing the attention of the company to his upright position.

"SILENCE!" roared Mr. Jorrocks, like Jupiter himself, and the noise was quelled on the instant.

"Gentlemen!" shrieked Captain Doleful, for the third time, "often as it has fallen to my lot to address meetings of my friends and fellow-citizens, never, no never, did I rise with feelings of such unmitigated embarrassment and trepidation as I do upon the present occasion, for I rise to take upon myself the high and important honour of offering to one of the most distinguished and enlightened assemblies human being ever addressed (loud cheers) a toast that no tongue can do

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justice in proposing, for it is the health of a man whose worth is superior to any form of words the English language is capable of supplying." (Immense cheers.) "'Ookey Valke," said Mr. Jorrocks in an undertone. "Gentlemen," continued Captain Doleful, "deeply conscious as I am of my own unworthiness and incapacity, I would infinitely prefer comprising the toast in the magic name of the gentleman whose health it is, were it not for the honourable and important office of master of the ceremonies of this unrivalled town, which renders it imperative upon me to attempt, however feebly and defectively, a slight portraiture of his unrivalled and surpassing worth. (Cheers.) Gentlemen, whether I regard our great master in his private relation as a friend and delightful companion, or look at him in that resplendent cynosure formed by the mastership of the Handley Cross fox-hounds, I know not in which character I feel the greatest difficulty and barrenness of expression—the greatest paucity of words, of simile, of fitting comparison. (Loud cheers.) In the one, our estimable chairman is all mildness, like the blessed evening-star; and in the other, all energy and daring, like the lion lord of the forest, rampant for his prey!" (Renewed cheers.) "'Ookey Valke," again said Mr. Jorrocks, blowing his nose. "Unbounded in his liberality—unbounded in his hospitality—unbounded in his urbanity, his private character is equalled only by his public one. (Loud cheers.) They are like rival moons!—opposition suns! (Immense cheers.) But, gentlemen, what boots it for an humble individual like myself to occupy your valuable time (cries of "Go on," "Go on,") in attempting to do justice to a subject that, as I have already said, is beyond the reach of praise—above the powers of words to accomplish; let me rather resume the place I humbly occupy at this festive board—resume it at least until my important avocations call me, and *you* I hope I may add," grinning like a death's head upon the company, "to another and equally enchanting scene; but before I sit down, let me utter the magic words, 'Health and long life to John Jorrocks!'"

The latter words were delivered in something between a

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screech and a yell, but fortunately the unearthly sound was immediately quelled by the instantaneous rising of the company, who, in the most uproarious manner—some standing on their chairs, others with one leg on a chair and another on the table—roared forth the most deafening discharge of applause that ever was discharged in the Dragon, while Mr. Jorrocks sat wondering how long it would last. After a lapse of some minutes, order began to be restored, the company gradually got shuffled into their seats, and, filling himself a brimming bumper of port, Mr. Jorrocks at length rose to return thanks.

“Well, now, dash my vig,” said he, sticking his thumbs into the armholes of his waistcoat, “but frind Miserrimus has buttered me uncommon. (Laughter and cheers.) Never was so reg’larly soaped i’ my life. (Renewed laughter.) A werry little more might have made one doubt his sincerity. I’m the man for all sorts of larks, and no mistake—one that goes the *extreme* animal—the entire pig—without a doubt. ‘Untin’ is the foremost passion of my ‘eart! Compared with it all others are flat and unprofitable. (Cheers and laughter.) It’s not never of no manner of use ‘umbuggin’ about the matter, but there’s no sport fit to hold a candle to fox-‘untin’. (Cheers from the blue-coated party.) Talk of stag-‘untin’! might as well ‘unt a hass!—see a great lolloppin’ beggar blobbin’ about the market-gardens near London, with a pack of ‘ounds at its ‘eels, and call that diversion! My vig, wot a go! (Laughter.) Puss-‘untin’ is werry well for cripples, and those that keep donkeys. (Renewed cheers from the blues, with angry looks from the green-coated gentry.) Blow me tight! but I never sees a chap a-trudgin’ along the turnpike, with a thick stick in his ‘and and a pipe in his mouth, but I ses to myself, there goes a man well mounted for ‘arriers! (Immense laughter and uproar continuing for some minutes, in the midst of which many of the green party left the room.) I wouldn’t be a master of muggers for no manner of money! (Renewed laughter.) Coursin’ should be made felony! Of all daft devils under the sun, a grey’ound’s the daftest! (Renewed uproar, mingled

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with applause.—Captain Couples looked unutterable things.) Racing is only for rogues! (Strider squinted frightfully.) I never goes into Tat.'s on a bettin'-day, but I says to myself as I looks at the crowd by the subscription-room door, 'There's a nice lot o' petty-larceny lads! I'd rayther be a black-faced chimley sweep nor a white-faced blackleg!'" (Hisses and applause.)

Strider now drew himself from under the table, and shaking a fist towards Mr. Jorrocks, while his eyes looked across, and down, and round the room, everywhere but at the chairman, he stalked off, followed by Couples, and Couples's son, and a gentleman for whom Couples had paid and brought in the chaise, amid ironical cheers from the blues, who encouraged Mr. Jorrocks by the most vociferous applause. "Believe me, my beloved bouys," continued Mr. Jorrocks, perfectly unconscious of the movement or the mischief he was doing, "that 'untin', 'untin', 'untin', is the sport! Oh," said he, with up-turned eyes, "vot a martyr I am to the chase! It makes me perfectly mad—I dreams about it night after night, and every night. Sometimes I'm tormented with foxes; I fancy I sees them grinnin' at me from all parts of the bed-curtains, and even sittin' upon the counterpane! Then I kicks them off, and away we all go to the tune of 'eads up and sterns down. Presently I sees Binjimin a-ridin' on a whirlwind, and directin' the chase; next minute I fancies myself on a pumped-out 'oss, a-'eavin' and sobbin' i' the heavy, not a soul with the 'ounds, who are going away with a fresh fox, jest as I sees the 'unted one dead beat, a-crawlin' down an 'edge-row; I outs with my 'orn, and, blow me tight, I can't sound it! At another time, a butcher's bouy, without an 'at, comes tearin' on a runaway tit, right among the 'ounds, who have thrown up in a lane, and the crashin' and yellin' is hawful. Again, I dreams, that jest as the darlin's are runnin' into the warmint all savage, and bristlin' for blood, a flock of sheep cross their line, when every 'ound seizes his mutton; and then I sees a man with a long bill in his 'and, with a lawyer in the distance, makin' towards me, and then I avakes.

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“Oh, gen’lemen! gen’lemen! none but an ’untsman knows an ’untsman’s cares! But come, never mind; care killed the cat! sha’n’t kill me—vot’s the toast?” said he, stooping and looking at his list. “Ah! I sees,” reading to himself in a pretty loud voice, “Doleful, M.C.—great sportsman—pleasant feller. Gen’lemen!” roared he, resuming an erect position, “gen’lemen! pray charge your glasses—bumper-toast—no ’eel-taps, no sky-lights, but reg’lar downright brimmin’ bumpers to the ’ealth of a man wot shall be immortal! Oh, gen’lemen, if ever it was hutterly impossible to do the right measure of genteel by any one, it is upon the present most momentous crisis, when I rises to butter a man that is superior to butter—to hoil a man that is Macassar itself. Oh! surely Doleful there,” looking at the vice-chairman, “is a trump, and no mistake. (Laughter.) Whether I looks at him as chief of the fantastic toers, or a leading sportsman of our brilliant ’unt, I doesn’t know which character is the brightest. (Immense laughter, for all who knew Doleful knew how perfectly innocent he was of sporting; Doleful himself began to make wry faces.) I loves him as a sportsman, though we all know he only ’unts on the sly! but then what a brilliant boy he is in a ballroom! Talkin’ of that, gentlemen, this is his benefit ball-night, and after we have had our twelve shillings’ worth of liquor, I vote we should each spend a guinea with Miserrimus; no one will grudge that trifle to such a werry pleasant trump—such a werry agreeable cock; and though guineas don’t grow upon gooseberry-bushes, still you must all fork out one to-night, for nobody goes in for less.” Doleful, on hearing Jorrocks put this finishing stroke to his hash, wrung his hands in agony, and rushed out of the room, vowing as he went downstairs that Jorrocks was the biggest ass—the greatest fool—the stupidest sinner, that ever came to Handley Cross. “TALLI-HO! gone away!” roared Mr. Jorrocks, as he saw Doleful bolt. “Hark back, hark back!” cried the company; but Doleful was deaf to the rate, and cut away home, half frantic with rage.

“Well,” said Mr. Jorrocks, “as the gen’leman’s hoff, it’s no use i’ finishin’ my oration; so, ’stead of the ’ealth of



"A MOST CONVIVIAL MEETING."

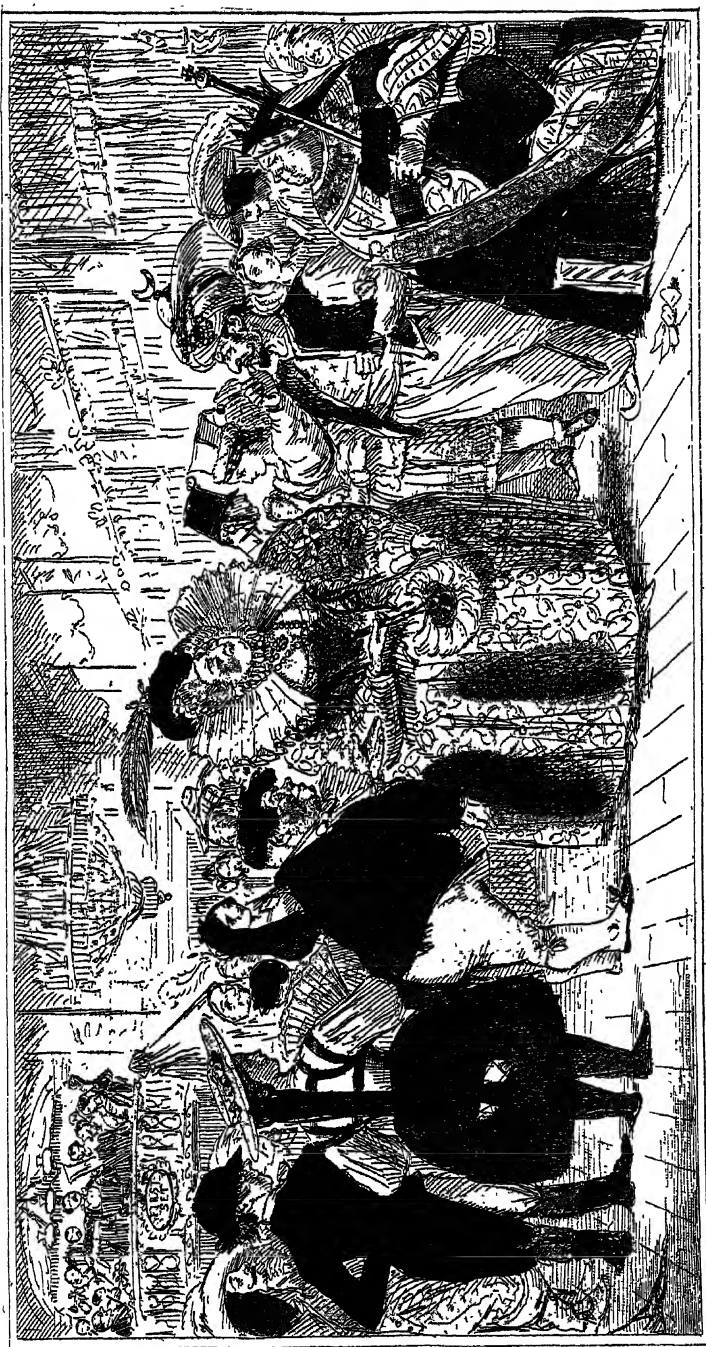
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Old Doleful, I begs to propose, most cordially, that I sit down."

Our friend then resumed his seat amidst great applause from the blues, and was considering how he could introduce a limping song he had composed in honour of Doleful, when a sudden rush of green and dark coats, headed by Strider, poured noisily into the room, and elbowed their way back to their places. The malcontents had held a consultation, and, advised by Doleful, were come to put their decision into execution.

"Gentlemen!" roared Strider, who had now reached his seat, "gentlemen!" repeated he, standing like the monument, and squinting frightfully, amid cries of "Hear, hear—chair, chair—order, order—go it, long 'un!" from adverse parties.—"I rise to propose a resolution," roared Strider, holding a slip of paper upside down; "I rise to propose a resolution," now getting the paper the right way for reading, "that I feel assured will be acceptable to the majority of this meeting—I move (reading) that Jorrocks John is the shabbiest fellow and greatest humbug we ever had at Handley Cross!" And Jorrocks, who had been crouching like a tiger for his spring, immediately rose amid immense uproar, and declared that he would move as an amendment, that "JORROCKS WAS A BRICK!" and putting the amendment, he declared that "the 'bricks' had it," whereupon a scene of indescribable confusion ensued, the green coats going in at the blues like bulls, and upsetting some half-dozen of them before they knew where they were, while Jorrocks, getting hold of Strider, dealt a heavy blow in his ribs, and then split his coat up to the collar, just as a green biscuit-dish grazed our master's head and knocked off his wig.

Lights were then extinguished, and the company fought their way out of the room as best they could. Jorrocks lost a coat-lap, which now flaunts as a banner-screen in the drawing-room of Mrs. Royston of the Dotfield hunt. And so ended what the veracious "Paul Pry" called "a most convivial evening."



The Handley Crofs Fancy Ball

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CHAPTER XXXI.

THE FANCY BALL.



"Dressing-up!"

WE must here indulge in a little retrospection.—Although Mr. Barnington hunted with the hounds, his lady took no notice of the Jorrockses and dashed past their one-horse chaise with the air of an ill-bred woman drawn by well-bred horses. On foot, she never saw them: and if she admitted a knowledge of their existence, it was in that casual sort of a way that one speaks of a horse or a dog.

Still she could not disguise from herself that they were thorns in her side. Mr. Jorrock's popularity, with Belinda's sweetness and beauty, went far to undermine the throne Mrs. Barnington had set up for herself. Not only were her evening parties less sought after, but she had reason to suspect that even Captain Doleful had declined a dinner invitation in favour of the Jorrockses.

As yet they had never met, save in the streets; but Captain Doleful's ball involved a crisis that could not be got over

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without a collision. This had been changed, by Mrs. Barnington's desire, into a fancy one, in order that she might triumph in the number and brilliance of her diamonds. The costume she fixed upon was that of Queen Elizabeth—not an ill-chosen one for her height and haughty bearing. The dress was ordered in London, as well for the purpose of having it unexceptionable in style and richness, as to enable her to blaze a splendid and unexpected meteor in the assembled host of Handley Cross. It was also expected to have a beneficial influence on Captain Doleful, should any doubt exist as to who was the fittest person for honour.

Notwithstanding Mrs. Barnington's precautions, the secret of her dress transpired. Mrs. Jorrocks's Betsey having established an intimacy with our friend John Trot, the footman, the fact descended from the exalted region of upper servitude, and was communicated to Mrs. Jorrocks, with the slight addition that the Queen had graciously lent Mrs. Barnington her crown and sceptre.

* * * * *

"Nay, then!" exclaimed Mrs. Jorrocks, thinking it was all over with her, and fancying she saw Mrs. Barnington sailing into the room with Captain Doleful, her head in the air and her eyes on the ceiling. Long did she muse ere the table of precedence flashed across her mind. No sooner did it occur to her, than off she darted to Mr. Jorrocks's drawers, where, amid a goodly collection of letters, she succeeded in finding Captain Doleful's one, stating that "the Lady of the M. F. H. came on after members of the royal family, and before all bishops' wives and daughters, peeresses, knights' dames, justices' wives, and so forth.

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"Mischievous 'ooman!" exclaimed Mrs. Jorrocks, conning the passage attentively. "Nasty, mean, circumwenting hanimal, I *sees* what she's after!—wants to steal a march on me as a member of the royal family. Come in as a queen, in fact! I'll be hupsides with her though!"

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Thereupon Mrs. Jorrocks took a highly-ornamented sheet of note-paper out of her envelope case, and concocted the following epistle to Captain Doleful:—

“Mrs. Jorrocks’ Comp^{ts} Capⁿ Doleful, and I will feel much obliged if he will have the kindness to lend her your table of Precedence for a few minutes, as she wishes to see how things stand in Handley Cross.

“DIANA LODGE.”

* * * * *

Captain Doleful was sitting on the counter in Miss Jelly’s shop, in deep consultation with her about his fancy dress, when the note arrived. Having to be the great man of the ball, it was incumbent upon him to have something better than the old militia coat, or even the dress-hunt one, revised. Time pressed, or he would have tried what the Jew clothes-shops in London could do for him, but Miss Jelly having a fertile imagination, and his interest at heart, he summoned her to his councils, to invent something showy without being expensive.

Many costumes were talked over. Spanish would not do, because the captain would have to show his legs; Swiss entailed a similar objection; and the old English costumes were equally objectionable. Some were too costly, others too complex.

* * * * *

“I have it!” at length exclaimed Miss Jelly, clapping her hands—“I have it!” repeated she, her face beaming with exultation. “You shall be the Great Mogul!”

“The Great Mogul!” repeated Captain Doleful, thoughtfully.

“Yes, the Great Mogul!” rejoined Miss Jelly. “A turban, with a half-moon in front, petticoat trousers, shell-jacket, moustachios, and so forth.”

“That will do, I think,” replied Doleful, squeezing her hand. “Sound well, and not cost much—will it?”

“Oh, *very* little!” replied Miss Jelly. “Let me see! One of your scarlet pocket-handkerchiefs will make the crown of the

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turban, and the folds can be formed of white neckcloths. I have a bird of paradise feather in my Sunday hat, and a string of large blue beads that will ornament the front. You want some summer trousers, so if you buy as much stuff as will make two pair, it will only be the making and altering, and you can get Nick Savoy into the house at three-and-sixpence a day and his meals, who can cut out the jacket, and I will make and trim it myself."

"Excellent!" exclaimed Captain Doleful, rubbing his hands, and putting a whole penny tart into his mouth. Just then Benjamin entered, and after having been refused credit for an ounce of paregoric, he put Mr. Jorrock's note into Captain Doleful's hand.

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"I'll bring it immediately," said the Captain to Benjamin, bolting out of the shop by the side-door, winking at Miss Jelly as he went.

* * * * *

Presently a stamp overhead announced that the Captain wanted Miss Jelly, who imprudently leaving the shop in charge of Benjamin, our friend filled his pockets with macaroons and his hat crown with sponge biscuits, while she was getting her message upstairs.

* * * * *

"Captain Doleful's compliments to Mrs. Jorrock's," said Miss Jelly, returning, "and is very sorry that the table of precedence has not been returned from the Heralds' College, where it was sent to be enrolled, but immediately it comes Mrs. Jorrock's shall have it."

"Yes, *marm*," said Benjamin, hurrying off.

* * * * *

"Please, *marm*, the Captain's compliments, and his table is at the joiner's gettin' rolled, but as soon as it comes 'ome you

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shall have it," was the answer Benjamin delivered to his mistress.

The Captain was shy for a day or two, and Mr. Jorrocks, being more intent upon hunting than etiquette, the poor lady was left to her own devices. Belinda did not appreciate the point, and, moreover, was too busy with her dress to enter upon the question as she should do.

Mrs. Jorrocks mistrusted the Captain, and thought he might be inclined to shuffle her off, under pretence of Mrs. Barnington being a queen.

"I'll be a queen, too!" at length exclaimed she, after a long gaze at the fire, thinking the thing over. "I'll be a queen, too!" repeated she, snapping her fingers, as though she were meeting Mrs. Barnington; "I'll be a queen!—the Queen of 'Earts!" exclaimed she, looking at herself in the eagle-topped mirror.

That evening she wrote the following letter to Miss Slummers, or Miss Howard, as she was now called:—

"DEAR MISS,

"We are agoing to have a fancy ball here, and I want your assistance in a dress. Was you ever the Queen of 'Earts? If so, please lend me your robes. If not, please lend me a crown as like the Queen of 'Earts' crown as you can get it. You know it's not exactly a crown, but something like a crown stuck on a cap. The sceptre seems like a wand with a rose at the end. Please let me know how I should be dressed behind, as the cards give one no idea. Should like the full robes, if you have them; but, in course, will be happy to take what I can get. Excuse haste and a werry bad pen. Yours, in haste,

"JULIA JORROCKS.

"DIANA LODGE, HANDLEY CROSS SPA.

"MISS CLARISSA HOWARD,

"*Sadlers' Wells Theatre, London.*"

Miss Slummers had never been the Queen of Hearts, but had enacted one of the rival Kings of Brentford, in the popular

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pantomime of that name, and, after a conference with the property-man of the theatre, she thus answered her distinguished friend:—

“HONOURED MADAM,

Your commands have been received; and I much regret that, never having appeared in the distinguished part of the Q. of Hearts, I have not the necessary properties to send you. I am not aware that the character has ever appeared upon the stage other than in pantomime, and never at either of the theatres to which I have been attached; but our property-man thinks the accompanying crown, fixed on a Swiss cap, ‘Canton de Berne,’ will come as near the card as we can get it. I also send a sceptre, to which is attached a large rose, that we used for the ‘two Kings of Brentford’ to smell at, which comes as near the spirit of the thing as anything can be. The sceptre is our best, and triple gilt. The robes should be of brocaded satin, and a large reticule of red silk, in the shape of a heart, dangling negligently on your left arm, will at once proclaim your character. The back of your dress is not material, as crowned heads are only looked at in front. Any further assistance I can be of will be extremely gratifying to me; and I beg to subscribe myself, with great respect, your most obedient and very humble servant,

“C. HOWARD.

“THEATRE ROYAL,
SADLERS’ WELLS.

“MRS. JORROCKS,
“*Diana Lodge, Handley Cross Spa.*”

So far, so good. The crown did admirably. It was studded with false brilliants, and looked splendid by candle-light. The sceptre, too, was imposing; and, regardless of expense, Mrs. Jorrocks had the richest brocade cut into the requisite shapes, to wear over a red satin gown she had by her. Nor was the heart-reticule forgotten; and, altogether, Mrs. Jorrocks succeeded in making herself a very fair representative of her

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Majesty of Hearts. Belinda's pretty blue and white petticoat, with the scarlet body of a Valencian peasant, was changed for a plain white satin dress, with a court plume, for her to attend as maid of honour on her Majesty. Charley was converted into a blue-bodied, white-legged page, with a Spanish hat and feathers.

The Great Mogul's dress progressed favourably, too. His wide sleeves and great trousers were done, and Miss Jelly had got a bargain of tarnished lace for braiding his red jacket. A splendid beard, whiskers, moustache, and all, were hired for the night, and a pair of five-and-sixpenny red leather slippers were bought, to act the part of shoes at the ball, and supersede a pair of worn-out pumps afterwards.

Mrs. Barnington having set the fashion of mystery about her dress, it was followed by the *élite* of the place, and each tried to mislead his neighbour. Swiss peasants said they were coming as Turks, Turks as Chinese, Charles the Seconds as Napoleons, and Huntsmen as Hermits. Still secrets will transpire, and Mrs. Barnington and Mrs. Jorrocks knew all about each other's dresses as well as if they were together every day. The former talked at Captain Doleful instead of to him, sometimes pretending to doubt whether the Jorrockses would go, fearing they would not, for vulgar people seldom liked getting so completely out of their element. For her part, she hoped they would, for she had a taste for natural curiosities—heard, too, their daughter was pretty, and should like to see her; and she closed her last interview by presenting Captain Doleful with ten pounds for her tickets.

Mrs. Jorrocks was less mealy-mouthed, and finding the table of precedence was not likely to come, she called at Miss Jelly's on the morning of the ball, and asked the Captain what time she should be there to go into the room with him. This was a poser, that even the skilful Captain found difficult to parry; but, while bustling his turban and trousers under the sofa, and fussing a greasy-covered arm-chair towards Mrs. Jorrocks, the dinner occurred to him, and, after looking vastly wise, he declared that that was the only thing he had any difficulty

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about. "You see," said he, "I am vice-president—then, Mr. Jorrocks is rather a sitter—not that I mean to say he gets drunk, but you know he is fond of society, gay and careless about time, and there are so many toasts to propose and so many speeches to make, that I fear it is utterly impossible to say what time we may get away, and I——"

"Well, but," interrupted Mrs. Jorrocks, "the dinner has nothin' to do with the dance; if Jun chooses to lower 'imself by gettin' drunk, that's no reason why you should, and one wice can always appoint another wice, and wicey wersey, I suppose."

"True," replied Captain Doleful, assenting to the position; "but, then, if all the dancing men are at the dinner, what use will a master of the ceremonies be to the ladies?"

"Fiddle the ladies!" exclaimed Mrs. Jorrocks; "it's not dancin' men wot 'ill go the dinner—not your 'air-curlin', arm-squarin', caperin' swells, but old-season'd casks, wot 'll never think o' the dance."

"I hope not," replied Captain Doleful. "Why, there will be Mr. Stobbs, for one."

"He'll not go to the dinner," rejoined Mrs. Jorrocks—"stays at 'ome with me."

* * * * *

Just then, Miss Jelly, judging her lodger was in a dilemma, adroitly resealed three or four old notes, and bringing them up on a tart-plate, apologised for intruding, but said the servants were all urgent for answers; and Captain Doleful, availing himself of the excuse, set to work most assiduously, and what with apologising, scribbling, and mistaking, Mrs. Jorrocks found she might as well go away.

* * * * *

Thus matters stood on the eventful evening whose progress we have so far described. Mrs. Jorrocks was right as to the formation of the dinner-party, few dancing men, and scarcely any fancy dressers, being there. Most of the young gentlemen



THE GREAT MOGUL.

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were corking their eyebrows, fixing on moustache, or drawing on dresses that made them look as unlike themselves as possible. Rear-admirals, who had never had a shave; colonels, who didn't know how to fasten on their swords; grandees, who didn't know how to get on their breeches; and fox-hunters, who did not know how to put on their spurs,—stood admiring themselves before their sisters' mirrors, thinking the ball hour would never arrive. Young ladies laced themselves extra tight, and a little more *tournure* was allowed for setting off the gay bodices and swelling drapery of their dresses. Neat ankles availed themselves of the license for wearing fancy dresses requiring short petticoats, while sweeping trains concealed others that were less fortunate in their make. Old dresses were metamorphosed into new, and new fancy ones were made for re-conversion into plain ones another time.

Confused with wine and anger, Captain Doleful rushed hurriedly home to his lodgings, and threw himself into the easy-chair by the fire. He was not done abusing Mr. Jorrocks, when Miss Jelly entered with a bed-candle and a little jug of warm water. She had laid his dress out on the bed; his red-and-white turban, beaded and feathered, with a barley-sugar half-moon, surmounted his baggy trousers; the red jacket was airing before the fire, and scarlet-and-white rosettes appeared on the insteps of the slippers. Seeing he was disturbed in his mind, Miss Jelly merely intimated that it wanted ten minutes to nine, and withdrew quietly below.

There was no time to lose; so hastily doffing his hunt-coat, &c., Captain Doleful was soon in his baggy trousers; and having stamped overhead, Miss Jelly was speedily with him, assisting him into his drawn linen vest, over which came the embroidered scarlet jacket, with baggy linen sleeves, tightening at the wrist; a long blue scarf encircling his waist, displaying the gilt handle of his militia sword. When he had got on his beard, moustaches, and whiskers, and surmounted the whole with his turban, his black eyes assumed a brightness, and his whole appearance underwent a change, that elicited an involuntary expression of admiration from Miss Jelly. "The

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Captain," she really thought, "looked splendid!" Thereupon, regardless of the increasing ratio of fare, he liberally offered her a ride in his fly to the rooms.

The Queen of Hearts commenced her toilette immediately after tea, and had no little trouble in fixing her crown, and her cap, and her front on her head. The rustling robes required much adjusting, and Belinda got little of Betsey's services that night.

Mrs. Barnington's robes being accurately made, were easily adjusted. Her great ruff rose majestically; her pink satin jewelled stomacher, piqued in the extreme, glittered with diamonds and precious stones, and her portentous petticoat of white satin embroidered with silver stood imperiously out. Round her neck she wore a costly chain, and her black coif was adorned with ropes and stars of jewels, with an enormous diamond brilliant in the centre. She rustled at every move.

By half-past nine all Handley Cross was in masquerade. Brothers met sisters in the drawing-rooms, and were lost in astonishment at each other; the servants came openly forward to inspect their young masters and mississes. The rain had ceased and been succeeded by a starlight night; the populace turned out to congregate about the ball-rooms, or at the doors where carriages waited to take up. The noise inside the Dragon kept a crowd up outside; and as the Queen of Hearts drove up for her husband, rival cheers announced her arrival.

"It's a man!" exclaimed one, putting his face close to the window, as Mrs. Jorrocks lowered the glass of the fly to give her orders to the flyman.

"It's not!" replied another.

"I say it is!" rejoined a third. "It's a beef-eater—what they stick outside shows to 'tice the company up." Then a fresh round of cheers arose, which might either be in answer to applause within, or in consequence of the discovery made without, for a mob is never very particular what they shout for. Meanwhile Mrs. Jorrocks drew up the glass protecting her maid of honour, her page, and herself, from the night air.

The Queen of Hearts was in a terrible fidget, and every

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moment seemed an hour. Flys drove up for gentlemen that were "not ready," and cut away for those whose turn came next. Shouts sounded in the various streets as befeathered and bespangled dresses darted through the crowds into the carriages; and as the vehicles fell into line by the rooms, there was such gaping, and quizzing, and laughing among the spectators, and such speculation as to what they were.

People generally go early to fancy balls; it is one of the few things of life that a person is not ashamed of being first at. Indeed, the order of things is generally reversed, and instead of people telling their friends that they mean to be there rather earlier than they do, they are apt to name a somewhat later time, in order to arrive first themselves. Some thirty or forty people had got there before Captain Doleful, chiefly door-payers, who came to see the fun, without regard to benefiting him. Three Bohemian Brothers, a Robin Hood, a Mail Guard, and a Rural Policeman were not a little puzzled at the Great Mogul's *empressement*, for though they knew him as Captain Doleful, M.C., they had no idea who the gentleman was in the turban and trousers.

The red folding-doors now kept flapping like condors' wings, as Highlanders, and archers, and deputy-lieutenants, and Hamlets, and sailors, and Turks, and harlequins, and judges, and fox-hunters came shouldering and elbowing in with variously-dressed ladies on their arms,—Russians, Prussians, Circassians, Greeks, Swiss, and Chinese—a confusion of countries all speaking one tongue. Captain Doleful was pushed from his place before the doors, and nobody ever thought of asking for him, so intent were they on themselves and each other. "Bless me, is that you?"—"Who'd have thought?"—"Mar, here's James!"—"Oh, dear, and William Dobbs!"—"What's your dress?"—"Beautiful, I declare!"—"Your pistols ar'n't loaded, I hope?"—"Splendid uniform!"—"French chasseur!"—"They told me you were coming as a postboy."—"Oh, dear, look there!"—"What a rum old lass!"—"The Queen of the Cannibal Islands!"—"Mrs. Hokey Pokey Wankey Fum!"

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We need scarcely say that this latter exclamation was elicited by the entrance of the Queen of Hearts, followed by her page in Spanish costume of spangled purple velvet and white, with black hat and feather ; and Belinda in white satin, with a court plume of feathers. A slight flush of confusion mantled over her lovely brow, imparting a gentle radiance to her languishing blue eyes, contrasting with the fixed and stern determination of her aunt's. Her majesty's appearance was certainly most extraordinary. The free-masonish sort of robes, the glittering crown on the sombre cap, the massive sceptre held like a parasol, were ludicrous enough ; but, in addition to this, her majesty had forgotten to put off her red and white worsted feet-comforters, and was making her way up the room with them dragging about her ankles.

Captain Doleful, all politeness, informed her of the omission, and unfortunately discovered himself, for no sooner did Mrs. Jorrocks find out to whom she was indebted, than keeping her arm in the Great Mogul's, where it had been placed while she drew the things off, she made a movement towards the ball-room door, which being seconded by the crowd behind—all anxious to get in and scatter themselves for inspection—they were fairly carried away by the tide, and the Queen of Hearts and the Great Mogul entered the room with people of all nations at their heels.

Great was Mrs. Jorrocks's gratitude. "Oh, dear, it was so werry kind—so werry engagin'. If it hadn't been the Captin announcin' himself, I should never have guessed it was him ;" and the Captain bit his lips and cursed his stupidity for getting himself into such a mess. Still the Queen of Hearts stuck to him, and, sceptre in hand, strutted up and down the well-lit room, fancying herself "the observed of all observers."

For the first time in his life, the Captain's cunning forsook him. He didn't know how to get rid of his incubus—and even if he did, he knew not whether to station himself in the ante-room to receive Mrs. Barnington, or to let the ball begin, and brazen it out. As he walked about, half frantic with rage, his turban pinching, and his beard and whiskers tickling him, an

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opposition Mogul gave the signal to the musicians, and off they went with a quadrille, leaving the couples to settle to the figure as the music went on.

Then as Turks *balanced* to Christians, and Louis Napoleon wheeled sweet Ann Page about by the arms, two highly-powdered footmen threw wide the doors, and in sailed Mrs. Barnington catching poor Doleful with Mrs. Jorrocks on his arm. One withering look she gave, and then drawing herself up into a sort of concentrated essence of grandeur, towered past, followed by old Jorrocks minus his coat-tail; and our worthy master, thinking to do all proper honours to the wife of a gentleman who subscribed so liberally to his hounds, immediately asked her to dance, which being indignantly refused, he consoled himself by taking all the pretty girls in the room by turns, who unanimously declared that he was a most agreeable, energetic old gentleman, and an excellent dancer.

And owing to the spirit with which Mr. Jorrocks kept it up, that ball was productive of a most prolific crop of offers, which, we need scarcely say, sent the Jorrocks funds up very considerably.

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CHAPTER XXXII.

ANOTHER SPORTING LECTOR.



R. JORROCKS'S tongue being now well laid in for talking, he determined to keep it going, by giving another sporting lecture. Being, however, of opinion that a lecture that was worth listening to was worth paying for, he determined to charge a shilling a head entrance, as well for the purpose of indemnifying himself against the expenses of the room, &c., as of giving Pigg the chance of any surplus there might be over for pocket-money, of which useful article James was rather short.

Our master's fame being now widely established, and occupation uncommonly slack at Handley Cross, a goodly muster was the result.

Precisely as the clock was done striking seven, Mr. Jorrocks ascended the platform, attended by a few friends, and was received with loud cheers from the gentlemen, and the waving of handkerchiefs from the lady part of the audience. Of these there was a goodly number, among whom was Mrs. Jorrocks, in a great red turban, with a plume of black feathers reclining gracefully on one side; Stobbs sat between her and Belinda, who was dressed in a pale pink silk, with a gold cord in her hair: Belinda looked perfectly happy. When the applause had subsided, Mr. Jorrocks advanced to the front of the platform (which was decorated as before), and thus addressed the audience:—

“Frinds and fellow-countrymen! Lend me your ears. That’s

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to say, listen to wot I'm a-goin' to say to you. This night I shall enlighten you on the all-important ceremony of takin' the field." (Loud applause.)

"TAKIN' THE FIELD!" repeated he, throwing out his arms and casting his eyes up at the elegant looping of his canopy. "TAKIN' THE FIELD! glorious sound! wot words can convey anything 'alf so delightful?"

"In my mind's eye I see the 'ounds in all their glossy pride a-trottin' around Arterxerxes, who stamps and whinnies with delight at their company. There's old Pristess with her speckled sides, lookin' as wise as a Christian, and Trusty, and Tuneable, and Warrior, and Wagrant, and Workman, and Wengence, and all the glorious comrades o' the chase.

"But to the pint. Ingenious youth, having got his 'oss, and learned to tackle him, let me now, from the bonded warehouse of my knowledge, prepare him for the all-glorious ceremony of the 'unt.

"How various are the motives," continued Mr. Jorrocks, looking thoughtfully, "that draw men to the kiver side. Some come to see, others to be seen; some for the ride out, others for the ride 'ome; some for happetites, some for 'ealth, some to get away from their wives, and a few to 'unt. Ah! give me the few—the chosen few—'the band of brothers,' as the poet says, wot come to 'unt!—men wot know the 'ounds, and know the covers, and know the country, and, above all, know when 'ounds are runnin', and when they're hoff the scent—men wot can ride in the fields, and yet 'old 'ard in the lanes—men wot would rayther see the thief o' the world well trounced in cover, than say they took a windmill in the hardour of the chase. Could I but make a little country of my own, and fill it with critturs of my own creation, I'd have sich a lot o' trumps as never were seen out o' Surrey. (Loud cheers.)

"Bliss my 'eart, wot a many ways there is of enjoyin' the chase," continued Mr. Jorrocks, "and 'ow one man is led into folly and extravagance by another! Because great Sampson Stout, who rides twenty stun', with the nerves of a steam-hengine, keeps twelve 'unters and two 'acks, little Tommy

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Titmouse, who scarcely turns nine with his saddle, must have as many, though he dare 'ardly ride over a water furrow. Because Sir Yawnberry Dawdle, who lies long in bed, sends on, Mr. Larkspur, who is up with the sun, must needs do the same, though he is obliged to put off time, lest he should arrive afore his 'oss. Because Lady Giddyfool puts a hyacinth in her lord's button-'ole, every hass in his 'unt must send to Covent Garden to get some. I werily believes, if a lord was to stick one of my peacock Gabriel Junks's feathers in his 'at, there would be fools to follow his example; out upon them, say I: 'unting is an expensive amusement or not, jest as folks choose to make it.

"There's a nasty word called 'can't,' that does an infinity of mischief. One can't 'unt without eight 'osses; one can't do without two 'acks; one can't ride in a country saddle; one can't do this, and one can't do that—hang your can'ts! Let a man look at those below him instead o' those above, and think 'ow much better hoff he is nor they. (Applause.) Surely the man with one 'oss is better off than the man with none! (Renewed applause.)

"Believe me, my beloved 'earers, if a man's inclined for the chase, he'll ride a'most anything, or valk sooner than stay at 'ome. I often thinks, could the keen foot-folks change places with the fumigatin' yards o' leather and scarlet, wot a much better chance there would be for the chase! They, at all events, come out from a *genuine* inclination for the sport, and not for mere show-sake, as too many do.

"Dash my vig, wot men I've seen in the 'unting-field! men without the slightest notion of 'unting, but who think it right to try if they like it, jest as they would try smokin' or eatin' olives after dinner.

"'You should get a red coat, and join the 'unt,' says a young gen'leman's old aunt; and forthwith our hero orders two coats of the newest cut, five pair of spurs, ten pair of breeches, twenty pair of boots, waistcoats of every cut and figure, a bunch of whips, diachulum drawers, a cigar-case for his pocket, a pocket siphonia, a sandwich-case for one side, and

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a shoe-case for t'other, and keeps a hair-bed afloat agin he comes 'ome with a broken leg. (Laughter and applause.)

"But I lose my patience thinkin' o' sich fools. If it warn't that among those who annually take the field, and are choked off by the expense, there are ingenuous youths who, with proper handlin', might make good sportsmen and valuable payin' subscribers, I'd wesh my 'ands of sich rubbish altogether. If any such there be within the limits of this well-filled room, let him open wide his hears, and I will teach him, not only how to do the trick, but to do it as if he had been at it all his life, and at werry little cost. Let him now pull out his new purchase, and learn to ride one 'oss afore he keeps two. We will now jog together to the meet. And mark! it's only buoys in jackets and trousers that are out for the *first* time.—Viskers, boots, and breeches are s'posed to come from another country. First we must dress our sportsman;—no black trousers crammed into top boots—no white ducks shaped over the foot, or fur-caps cocked jauntily on the 'ead—real propriety and no mistake!

"That great man Mr. Delme Radcliffe, says in his interestin' blue-book, 'that there's nothin' more snobbish than a black tye with top-boots.' It was a werry clever remark, and an enlargement of Mr. Hood's idea of no one ever havin' seen a sailor i' top-boots. Bishops' boots Mr. Radcliffe also condemned, and spoke highly in favour of tops cleaned with champagne and abricot jam. 'Hoganys, 'owever, are now all the go, and the darker the colour, the keener the wearer expects to be thought. I saw a pair i' the Cut-me-Downs last year that were nearly black.

"Leather breeches Mr. Radcliffe spoke kindly of, but unless a man has a good many servants, he had better have them cleanin' his 'oss than cleanin' his breeches. Leathers are werry expensive, though there's a deal of wear i' them. I have a pair that were made by White o' Tarporley, in George the Third's reign, and though the cut is summut altered, the constitution of them remains intact. In those days it was the fashion to have them so tight that men used to be slung into them by pulleys from their ceilings; and a fashionable man,

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writin' to his tailor for a pair, added this caution, 'Mind, if I can get into them, I won't have them.' Leathers were once all the go for street-work, and werry 'andsome they looked.

"I've heard a story, that when George the Fourth was Prince, a swell coveted the style of his leathers so much that he bribed the Prince's valet largely for the recipe. 'You shall have it,' said the man, pocketin' the coin and lookin' werry wise; 'the fact is,' added he, 'the way his Royal 'Ighness's royal unmentionables look so well is, because his Royal 'Ighness sleeps in them.'" ("Haw, haw, haw," grunted Mr. Jorrocks, in company with several of his audience.) "Some chaps affect the dark cords as well as the 'hogany boots, but there's as much haffectation i' one as the other. Blow me tight, if it weren't for the bright colours there wouldn't be many fox-'unters.

"The custom of riding in scarlet is one it becomes me to speak upon.—I doesn't know nothin' about the hantiquity of it, or whether Julius Cæsar, or any other of those antient covies sported it or not; but, like most subjects, a good deal may be said on both sides of the question. There's no doubt it's a good colour for wear, and that it tends to the general promotion of fox-'unting, seeing that two-thirds of the men wot come out and subscribe wouldn't do so if they had to ride in black. Still, I think ingenuous youth should not be permitted to wear it at startin', for a scarlet coat in the distance, though chock full of hignorance, is quite as allurin' as when it encloses the most experienced sportsman.

"I remembers dinin' at a conivial party in London, where there was a werry pleasant fat 'M. F. H.,' who told a story of wot 'appened to him in the New Forest. This, I need scarcely say, is a great wood of many thousand hacres (a hundred thousand p'haps), and unless a man looks sharp, and keeps near the 'ounds, he stands a werry good chance of losin' of them. Well, it so 'appened that this 'ere fat gen'l'man did lose them, and castin' about, he saw a red coat flyin' over a flight o' rails i' the distance. In course he made for it, but afore he got up, what was his extonishment at seein' red-coat pull up

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and charge back! He found the gen'l'man knew nothin' about the 'ounds, and was gettin' on capital without them.

"A Yorkshire frind o' mine went to a union 'unt, where men from three countries attended.—The field was frightful! Three 'underd and fifty 'ossmen, all determined to ride, and as jealous as cats. Now my frind being a true-born Briton, and not to be made to ride over nothin' on compulsion, started away in quite a different line to what the fox broke, followed by an 'underd 'ossmen, or more. The 'arder he went, the 'arder they rode, and fearin' he might fall, and be flummox'd, he made for a windmill on a neighbouring 'ill, and stuck his 'oss's tail to the sails.

"Up came his followers, puffin' and blowin' like so many grampuses. 'Vich vay? vich vay? vich vay are th' 'ounds gone?' gasped they.

"'Ounds!' exclaimed my frind; 'I've been ridin' away from you all the time; 'ounds be gone t'other way!'" ("Haw, haw, haw!" a laugh in which the whole room joined, till the mirth got up into a roar, which Mr. Jorrocks availed himself of to pay his respects to a stiff tumbler of brandy and water that now began to send forth its fragrance from the table at the rear of the platform.)

Smacking his lips, he thus resumed—

"So much for the force of example, gen'lemen;—had my frind been in black, the crowd wouldn't have come. Still the colour's good, and it ar'n't the use, but the abuse, that I complains on. For my part I likes a good roomy red rag, that one can jump in and out of with ease. These fine tight things," continued he, taking hold of his sky-blue coat lined with pink silk, and looking at his canary-coloured shorts, "are all well enough for dancin' in, but for real scrimmagin' outdoor work, there's nothin' like room and flannel;—good long-backed coats, with the waistcoat made equally warm all round, and the back to come down in a flap, and plenty of good well-lined laps to wrap over one's thighs when it rains"—Mr. Jorrocks suiting the action to the word, and describing the cut of each article as he went on. "Berlin gloves are

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capital for 'unting in," continued he; "they keep your 'ands warm and do to rub your nose upon in cold weather.

"Youngsters should be cautious o' spurs;—they may use them wot is called incontinently, and get into grief. I disagree with Jeffery Gambado, who recommends the free use of them, as tendin' to keep the blood in circulation, and preventin' one's toes catchin' cold. He recommends spurrin' i' the shoulder, where he says an 'oss has most feelin', because he has most weins; adding, that by spurrin' at his body, five times in six your labour is lost; for if you are a short man, you spur the saddlecloth only; if a leggy one, you never touch him at all; and if middlin', the rider wears out his own girths, without the 'oss being a bit the better for it; but my own opinion is, that the less ingenuous youth uses them the better.

"A slight knowledge o' farmin' promotes the true enjoyment of the chase. What so 'umiliatin' as to see a big farmer bullyin' a little man in leather and scarlet for ridin' over his seeds, when the innocent is ignorant of havin' done nothin' o' the sort. Seeds, my beloved 'earers, are what grow into clover, or new-land hay; they come hup arter the corn-crop, and when that is reaped, if an inquiring sportsman will examine the ground, he will see little green herbs, like crow's feet, shootin' hup 'mong the stubble, which rear themselves into stalks with expandin' leaves, and those glorious pink and white balls, called clover, wot smell so fragrantly as one loiters pensively along the shady dusty lanes.

"Now, if the iron-shod 'unter careers over these young and tender plants, leavin' his copyright behind him, and it comes wet shortly arter, the standin' water perishes the plants, and leaves the farmer to water his bed with tears and lamentation. Oh, miserable bunch-clod!

"So it is with wheat. If you see a field nicely laid away, the surface all smooth and the furrows all open, you may conclude that is wheat, even though the tender green blades—the promissory notes of life's comin' year, are not yet apparent. Some labour 'ard to make themselves believe that it increases the crop to ride over it, and many a hargument I've held with

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farmers in favour of that position myself, but no man, who treats himself to a little undisguised truth, can make himself believe so, unless, indeed, he is satisfied that a drove of hoxen would improve the prospects of a flower-garden by passin' a night in frolicsome diversion. The wheat-field is the farmer's flower-garden!—It is to it that he looks for the means of payin' his rent, and giving his hamiable wife and accomplished darters a new piannet, and a scarlet welwet bonnet a-piece, with a black feather drooping over the left hear (Mr. Jorrock looking slyly at Mrs. J. as he said this); and young and heedless men, if even they have no compassion on the old cock-farmer, should think what distress they will cause to the hens if they lose their scarlet welwet bonnets with the appurtenances. Some wags say that wheat is called 'ard corn because it stands a wast of ridin' over; but I maintains that it no more means that than that 'ard-money currency means 'money 'ard to get at,—or that an 'ard rider means a man wot will trot down 'Olborn 'ill on a frosty mornin'. Let every feelin' man, then, consider when he is about to ride over wheat, that he is about to trample under foot scarlet welwet bonnets, and with them the farmer's darters' best and tenderest 'opes.

“And here let me observe that I cannot help thinkin' that that celebrated man, Gambado, has been the unconscious means of many a field of wheat being trampled down. When such great men talk lightly on a subject, little minds catch the infection, and far outstrip the author's most sanguinary conceptions.

“Speaking in laudatory terms of the merits of the dray 'oss—merits that no one will deny—Gambado talks of the figure they are calculated to make on the road or in the field. ‘Scarce any of them,’ says he, ‘but is master of thirty stone and hupwards!’ (Roars of laughter.) ‘What a sublime scene would it be,’ continues he, ‘to see fourscore or a 'underd of these hanimals on the full stretch over a piece of wheat, to catch sight of an 'ound!’ (Roars of laughter.)

“Gentlemen,” continued Mr. Jorrock, looking very irate, “I'm sorry for your mirth—(hisses and laughter)—shocked at

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your immorality, in fact. Dash my vig if I ar'n't ! (Renewed laughter and cheers.)

"Such undecent mirth would disgrace a Cockney. A Cockney looks upon a farmer as an inferior crittur!—a sort of domestic convict, transported far beyond the bills o' mortality, and condemned to wander in heavy 'ob-nailed shoes amid eternal hacres o' dirt and dandylions. I 'opes such is not your opinion. (Loud cries of "No, no," and cheers.) I'm glad sich wickedness finds no response here." Mr. Jorrocks again retired, and recomposed himself with another draught of brandy and water.

* * * * *

"Now," said he, licking his lips, as he returned to the front of the platform ; "let ingenuous youth suppose himself at the meet, and that he has been presented to the M. F. H., to whom the greatest respect and reverence should always be paid, for there's no man to compare to him i' point o' greatness. The meet is the place for lettin' off the fulminatin' balls of wit ; but unless young green'orn be a tolerably jawbacious sort of chap, he had better be a listener at first. There are a few stock jokes that do for any country, the ready appliance of which stamps the user as a wag or a sportsman among those who don't know no better. 'Dear sir,' says one man to another, ridin' a wite-faced 'oss, 'I fears your nag is werry bad !'

"'Ow so ?' inquires t'other, all alarm.

"'Vy, he's all vite in the face !' ("Haw ! haw ! haw !")

"'Yours is an expensive nag, I see,' observes a second.

"'Not more than other people's,' is the answer.

"'Yes, he is ; for I see he wears boots as well as shoes,' pointing to speedy-cut boots.

"'Ave I lost a shoe in coming ?' inquires a gentleman, who with a late start has come in a hurry.

"'They're not all on before !' exclaims half a dozen voices, ready with the joke.

"'Does your mother know you are out ?' is a familiar inquiry that may be safely hazarded to a bumptious boy in

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a jacket. 'More dirt the less hurt!' is a pleasant piece o' consolation for a friend with a mud mask; and 'One at a time, and it will last the longer!' is a knowin' exclamation to make to a hundred and fifty friends waiting for their turns at a 'unting-wicket. 'Over you go; the longer you look the less you'll like it!' may be 'ollo'd to a friend lookin' long at a fence. 'Hurry no man's cattle! you may keep a donkey yourself some day!' is the answer to the last. When you see a lawyer floored, sing out, 'There's an 'oss a-layin' down the law!' If a chap axes if your nag will jump timber, say, 'He'll leap over your 'ead.' These, and sich as these, are your tickets for soup, as the cook said when she basted the scullion with the hox-tail! (Loud laughter.)

"Flattery is easier accomplished than wit, and the meet is a place where butter, with a little knowledge, will go a long way. All masters of 'ounds like praise. Some are so fond on it, that they butter themselves. If you see 'ounds' ribs, and their loins are well filled and flanks hollow, you may say they look like their work; if they're fat, say they are werry even in condition; if lean, that they look like goin' a bust; if jest noways in 'ticklar, you can't get wrong if you say, you never saw a nicer lot. If you see some with clips on the hears, or along the backs, you may conclude they are new comers, and ax where they are from. Rich-coloured 'ounds you may liken to the Belvoir, and then you can talk of Goodhall and Guider, or of the Quorn Trueman, or even go back as far as Furrier and Hósbaldeston; and swear you never saw sich legs and feet; in short, let legs and feet, or legs and loins, be the burthen of your song. Beware of callin' 'ounds dogs, or sterns tails. Sich a slip would make the M. F. H. turn tail on you directly.

"It looks werry knowin' to take a bit o' biscuit out of your pocket, as you are lookin' over the 'ounds, and make them rise on their hind legs to receive it, while you scrutinise them werry attentively. This is a most scientific proceedin', and will immediately stamp you as a werry knowin' 'and, if not for an M. F. H. himself. Still let your talk be of legs and loins, with an occasional mention of helbows and shoulders. Perfection!

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symmetry! 'andsome! level! bone! breedin'! condition! Lord 'Enry! Sir Richard, Sir Tatton, Mr. Jorrocks—are terms that may be thrown in at random, jest as the butter seems to go down. If, however, ingenuous youth's afraid o' bein' tempted out of his depth, it's a safe wentur' to look werry approv'in'ly at the pack generally, and then say that 'they're larger nor some he has seen, and not so large as others.' (Laughter.) In sayin' this, it may p'r'aps be well jest to feel his 'oss with the spur, so as to make him wince, which will give him an excuse for with-drawin' on the score o' being afraid o' kickin' the 'ounds, and save him from bein' axed to name the larger or smaller packs he's seen, which might be inconvenient.

"'Untsmen are either 'eaven-born or hidiots—there's no medium. Every schoolboy can criticise their performance. It's 'stonishin' how quickly 'untsmen are run up and down, jest like the funds, with the bulls and the bears. As no M. F. H. keeps what he considers a fool, it may be well to commence in the soapy line; for even though a master may abuse a servant himself, he may not fancy his field doing so too.

"At the meet, every man's time is accordin' to his own convenience. Should he have been too early, the 'ounds have come late; and should he be late, the 'ounds were there afore their time. The last man always says that there's no one else comin', as in course he does not see the wit of waitin' after he arrives.

"Among the many followers of the chase, there be some men wot start with wot seems like a good mould-candle passion for the chase, but, somehow or other, after a few seasons, it simmers down to little better nor a fardin' rushlight. After the first brush of the thing is over, they begin to economise their 'osses in November, that they may have them fresh about Christmas; or they don't work them much in February, as they wish to save a couple to take to town in the spring; or tool their missesses about in the Booby Hutch. Ven I hear chaps talk this way, I always reckon upon seein' their coats nailin' the happle-trees up afore long.

"Some are much greater 'oss coddles than others. When

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Tat wrote to Ferguson to know vot he wanted for 'Arkaway, and whether the 'oss was in work, Ferguson replied, ' The price of 'Arkaway is six thousand guineas, and I 'unts him twice and thrice a week ! ' (Roars of laughter.)

" Some men keep servants to be their masters.

" ' I shall ride the roan to-morrow, Jones,' says a gen'l'man to his grum.

" ' Can't, sir ; just given him a dose o' physic.'

" ' Well, then, the black. He's not been out since yesterday week.'

" ' His turn's not till Toosday.'

" ' Oh, never mind ! Just let me have a look at him.'

" ' *Can't*. Stable's done up—not to be hopen till four ; so mizzle, master.'

" In course these chaps have 'igh wages," continued Mr. Jorrocks, " or they couldn't 'ave such himperence. They are the bouys wot won't let their masters buy 'osses o' men o' my woracity and judgment, unless they 'ave their ' reg'lers,' five per cent. on the price, or as much more as they can get. A man wot would be master of his stable must never consult his grum about a quad. Consult 'im, forsooth ! " exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks. " Why, there is not one grum i' fifty that knows when an 'oss he has the care on is lame. They'll go slouchin' to cover on 'osses that their masters pronounce lame the moment they mount. A man with a strong bouy and a hash-plant is generally master of his stud ; a master with a bouy and no hash-plant is like a fiddle without a stick.

" More 'osses are ruined from want o' work than from the excess on't. Take a season through, and 'ow werry few days there are on which there is really anything for gen'l'men's 'osses to do ; though, to be sure, such days generally come in a heap ; yet, as no one can say how long a run o' luck will last, my advice is, to keep goin' as long as ever you can. A man can get but six days a week if he labours ever so, and there are werry few wot would not rayther have four, or may be two. The flash o' ridin' long distances to meet one pack o' 'ounds, when another's at 'and, arises from the pleasure of sportin' a

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red coat through a longer line o' country, and vinkin' at the gals on the road, or from a desire to be talked of as havin' done so, and as being werry keen 'ands. I generally find them werry great fools!

"There is another way that would-be sportsmen have of showin' their keenness. Durin' a storm it is not unusual for the M. F. H. to advertise that th' 'ounds will meet at the kennel the first day the weather permits. Well, as soon as ever the eves begin to drop, the would-bes put on their red coats and go to the kennel, continuin' the process day after day until the thaw really arrives; they throw up, and swear they von't 'unt with him any more.

"'Not hung yourself yet, Gilhespie?' suitin' the haction to the word by feelin' your neck and cockin' your thumb under your hear, is a fine sportin' interrogatory to put to a frind in the street durin' a frost. All these mendacious means let ingenuous youth despise. It's one thin' to cover your hignorance and another to help you to imperance. I does the former only.

"And now," continued the worthy lecturer, casting his eyes up to his canopied curtain, as he jingled the silver in his canary-coloured shorts—"And now, if I had a few words 'bout cost, 'bout old £ s. d., I think I'd be ready for a start. The cost of 'unting, my beloved 'earers, like all other things, depends a'most entirely on 'ow you go about it. The only really indispensable outlay is the subscription to the 'ounds, which ought always to be paid punctual in advance, jest like you 'ave to pay the stakes at a race. Whoever wants, the M. F. H. should be paid. Prudence and 'conomy are all right and proper in everything 'cept 'unting. For 'unting there must be a liberal outlay and no grumblin'. Mustn't do like dirty Harry Tight, who, when Fleecy axed what he would subscribe to my 'ounds, exclaimed, 'Subscribe! I wouldn't insult Mr. Jorrocks by offerin' of him money!' (Laughter and hisses.) Insult," exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks, looking very irate, "jest as if I was a likely man to be insulted with the hoffer of money. Much more likely to insult 'im for *not* offerin' it. (Laughter and applause.)

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“Well, then, the requirements o’ the master bein’ satisfied,” continued Mr. Jorrocks, buttoning up and slapping his breeches-pocket, “let ingenuous youth turn his ’tention to the stable. It’s no use giving a publican and sinner a guinea or five-and-twenty shillings a week for keepin’ your quadrupeds, when you can rent a stable and keep them yourself for ten or twelve shillin’. There’s not even the benefit of any flash i’ the thing, which is wot moves many men to the ’orrors o’ the chase. Still less use is it wastin’ your substance on old Bonnyface’s ’ouse, with his sixpenny breakfast for ’alf-a-crown, and dinners i’ like proportion, when you can get a comfey rumph lodgin’ and find yourself for ’alf or a third o’ the money. There are no people want puttin’ to rights so much as the innkeepers. Kiver ’acks are all gammon for men wi’ short studs. An ’ack can do nothin’ but ’ack, while he will cost as much as a third ’oss wot will both ’ack and ’unt. Let ingenuous youth then learn to dispense with the useless appendage. I often think,” continued Mr. Jorrocks musingly, “that it would be a capital thing to pass ingenuous youth generally through a sort of Chobham camp to learn ’em wot they can really do without.

“Ingenuous youth, ’aving now got all the implements o’ the chase scraped together, and the early rains of dear delightful November—the best and plisantest month i’ the year—’avin’ well salivated the ground, forthwith let ’im put all my precepts in practice, instead o’ sneakin’ off to Boulogne or Paris for the winter, arter talkin’ ’bout the delights of ’unting all the summer.

“‘Time trieth troth,’ says the proverb, but ‘November trieth truth’ i’ the ’unting line, and men that don’t like ’unting had much better not give themselves the trouble of pretendin’ they do, for they’re sure to be found out, and branded for ’umbugs for their trouble. It’s a werry rum thing ’ow few men there are who candidly say they don’t like it. They’ve all been keen sportsmen at some time or other o’ their lives. Every man,” continued Mr. Jorrocks, sententiously, “wot prefers his ’ealth to the interests o’ the Seidletz pooder makers, will get as much ’unting as ever he can afore Christmas. (Great laughter and

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applause.) So now let's be doin'!" added he, rubbing his elbows against his sides as if anxious for the fray.

"Let us s'pose the last, *last* fumigatin' piece o' conceit has cast up, and the M. F. H. gives the hoffice to the 'untsman to throw off. 'Osses' 'eads turn one way, th' 'ounds brisk up at the move, the coffee-room breaks up, frinds pair off to carry out jokes, while the foot-people fly to the 'ills, and the bald-'eaded keeper stands 'at in 'and at the gate, to let th' 'ounds into cover.

"*'Elen in !*' at length cries the 'untsman, with a wave of his 'and, and in an instant his 'osses' 'eels are deserted. The vipper-in has scuttled round the cover, and his rate and crack are 'eard on the far side. 'Gently, Conqueror! *Conqueror, have a care !* Ware 'are! ware 'are!'"

* * * * *

Here Mr. Jorrocks paused, apparently for the purpose of recollecting something.

"There's a bit o' potry due here," observed he; "but somehow or other it von't come, to halloo!

"Great, glorious, and free,
First flower o' the hocean, first——"

continued he. "No, *that* von't do, that was old Dan's dodge. Yet it's somethin' like that, too; can no one help me? Ah, I have it:—

"Delightful scene!
When all around is gay, men, 'osses, dogs;
And in each smilin' countenance appears
Fresh bloomin' 'ealth, and uniwersal joy.'

"And yet that's not exactly the place it should have come in at nouter," observed Mr. Jorrocks, recollecting himself; "that scrap is meant for the meet; throwin' off is thus described by Peter Beckford, or some other gen'l'man wot described it to him. Howsomever, it von't do to waste a cotation, so you can

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jest joggle t'other one back in your minds to the right place.
This is throwin' off:—

“ ‘See! ’ow they range
Dispersed, ’ow busily this way and that,
They cross, examinin’ with curious nose
Each likely ’aunt. ’Ark! on the drag I ’ear
Their doubtful notes, preludin’ to a cry
More nobly full, and swelled with every mouth.’

“Now that’s poetry and sense too,” observed Mr. Jorrocks, smacking his lips, “which is more than poetry always is; for a poet, you see, has to measure his words, and werry often the one that would best express vot he vonts von’t fit in with t’others, so he’s obliged to halter his meanin’ altogether, or mount a lame steed. For my part I likes prose best, and I reckon Peter’s prose better nor most men’s werse. Hear ’ow he finds his fox.” Mr. Jorrocks then took his newly-bound Beckford from the table at the back of the platform, and read as follows:—

“ ‘Ow musical their tongues! And as they get near to him, ’ow the chorus fills! ’Ark! he is found. Now, vere arc all your sorrows and your cares, ye gloomy souls! or where your pains and aches, ye complainin’ ones! one holloo has dispelled them all. Vot a crash they make! and hecho seemingly takes pleasure to repeat the sound. The ’stonished traveller forsakes his road; lured by its melody, the listenin’ ploughman now stops his plough, and every distant shepherd neglects his flock, and runs to see him break. Vot joy! vot heagerness in every face!’

“Now,” said Mr. Jorrocks, smacking his lips again, “that’s what I call *real prime stuff*—the concentrated essence of ’untin’—the XXX of sportin’, so different from the wire-spun, wishy-washy yarns of modern penny-a-liners, who smother their meanin’ (if they have any) in words. If I’ve read Peter once, I’ve read him a hundred times, and yet I finds somethin’ fresh to admire every time. Wernor and Hood, Birchin Lane, published this edition in 1796; and on the title-page is pasted a hextract from a newspaper that would adorn a monument.



"AH! IT'S TALLI-HO BACK!"

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‘Monday, 8th March, 1811, at his seat, Stapleton, in Dorsetshire, Peter Beckford, Esq., aged 70. Mr. Beckford was a celebrated fox-’unter, and hauthor of ‘Letters on ’Unting.’ There’s an inscription for a marble monument! ‘Multum in parvo,’ as Pomponius Ego would say. Blow me tight! but I never looks at Billy Beckford supplicatin’ the king on his marble monument in Guildhall, but I exclaims, ‘Shake Billy from his pedestal and set up Peter!’ (Hisses and applause.)

“I once wrote my epitaph, and it was werry short,—

“ ‘Hic jacet Jorrocks,’

was all wot I said; but the unlettered huntsman, or may be M. F. H., might pass me by, jest as he would a dead emperor. Far different would it be should this note follow—‘Mr. J. was a celebrated fox-’unter, and lecturer upon ’unting.’ Then would the saunterin’ sportsman pause as he passed, and drop a tribute to the memory of one who loved the chase so well. But I’m gettin’ prosaic and off the line. Let us ’ark back into cover! The chase, I sings! Let’s see.

“We had jest found our fox. Well, then, let’s at Peter again, for there’s no one boils one hup into a gallop like him. Here’s a description of the thief o’ the world afore he breaks.” Mr. Jorrocks reads:—

“ ‘Mark ’ow he runs the cover’s hutmost limits, yet dares not wentur’ forth; the ’ounds are still too near! That check is lucky! Now if our frinds ’ead him not, he will soon be off!’

“TALLI-HO!” screamed Mr. Jorrocks, at the top of his voice. “Dash my vig, that’s the cry!” continued he, holding his hand in the air. “See ’ow pale the gen’leman in light scarlet and bishop’s boots is turnin’, and how delighted old Jack Rasper, in the cut-away olive, broadcords, and ’oganies is; his low-crowned ’at’s in the hair, for he sees the warmint, a sight more glorious nor the lord mayor’s show; yet he ’olloas not! Ah, it’s talli-ho back! The fox is ’eaded by yon puppy in purple, strikin’ a light on the pommel of his saddle. ’Ope he’ll soon be sick! Th’ ’ounds turn short, and are at him again. Have at him, my beauties! Have at him, my darlin’s! Have at



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him, I say ! Yonder he goes at t'other end !—now he's away ! Old Rasper has him again ! 'Talli-ho, *away !*' he cries. The old low-crowned 'at's in the hair, and now every man 'oops and 'ollows to the amount of his superscription. *Twang ! twang ! twang !* goes the Percival ; crack ! crack ! crack ! go the whips ; 'ounds, 'osses, and men, are in a glorious state of excitement ! Full o' beans and benevolence !

"So am I, my beloved 'earers," observed Mr. Jorrocks, after a pause, "and must let off some steam, or I shall be teachin' you to override the 'ounds." So saying, Mr. Jorrocks retired to the back of the platform, and cooled himself with a fresh glass of hot brandy and water. Presently he returned, and thus resumed his discourse :—

"Oh ! my beloved 'earers, if I'd been at the great Mr. Pomponius Hego's helbow when in describin' this critical period of the chase he penned the words, '*go along*, there are three couple of 'ounds on the scent,' I'd ha' seen if I couldn't ha' got him to put in 'now 'old your jaws, and 'old 'ard ! and let 'em settle quietly to the scent.' Believe me, my beloved 'earers, the words '*go along*, there are three couple of 'ounds on the scent,' have lost many a run and saved the life of many a warmint. 'Ow I likes to see the 'ounds come quietly out, settlin' and collectin' together, gradually mending their pace as they go, till they brew up a reg'lar bust. That's the way to make the foxes cry 'Capevi !'" added he. (Laughter and applause.)

"Here let me hobserve," continued Mr. Jorrocks, "that it's a grand thing for ingenuous youth to get a view of the warmint at startin' ; by so doing he gets a sort of wested interest in the fox, and rides arter him as he would arter a thief with his watch. There's a knack in doin' this, and some men are cleverer at it than others, but half the battle consists in not being flurried—'Yonder he goes ! yonder he goes ! Talli-ho ! talli-ho !' exclaim a dozen people, pointin' different ways—and hearin' that a fox is a quick travellin' beast, ingenuous youth begins to look some half a mile ahead ; whereas, if the people were to cry, 'Here he is ! here he is !' pointin' downwards, Spooney would take a nearer range, and see that a fox travels

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more like a cat nor a crow. Folks overlook the fox, jest as one overlooks a mustard-pot under one's nose.

“ Well, then, my beloved 'earers, glorious talli-ho ! talli-ho !—whose very echo kivers me all over with the creeps—is holloaed and repeated, and responded and re-echoed, and th' 'ounds are settlin' to the scent. As soon as ever you 'ear the cry, make up your minds either to go on or go 'ome. But I won't s'pose that any man will stop stirrin' till the puddin's done ; at all ewents, not till he sees a fence, so thrust your 'eads well into your 'ats, tighten your reins, 'arden your 'earts, and with elbows and legs, elbows and legs, get forrard to the 'ounds”—Mr. Jorrocks suiting the action to the word, straddling and working an imaginary horse with his arms.

“ Now we are away ! The cover's wacated, and there's not another within four miles, which courtesy will call fourteen ! Vich vay's the vind ? South-east, as I live. Then he's away for Brammelkite Brake ! Now for your topographical dictionaries, or, vot is still better, some gemman with a map of the country in his 'ead. The field begins to settle into places like folks at the play. If there's no parson to pilot the way, gen'l'man with 'osses to sell take the first rank. Every one now sees who are there, and many may be wantin' at the end to tell who come in so ; a rasper well negotiated at this time o' day has sold many a screw. After the gen'l'man with 'osses to sell comes the 'untsman, entreatin' the gen'l'men with 'osses to sell not to press upon the 'ounds ; but as he only talks to their backs, they regard the exhortation as a mere figure o' speech. The top-sawyers of the 'unt will be close on the 'untsman. There will not be many of these ; but should there be a barrack in the neighbourhood, some soger officers will most likely mex up and ride at the 'ardest rider among 'em. The dragon soger officer is the most dangerous, and may be known by the viskers under his nose. A foot soger officer's 'oss is generally better in his wind than on his legs. They generally wear chin wigs, and always swear the leaps are nothin' compared with those in the county they come from—Cheapside, p'r'aps.

“ In the wake of the top-sawyers and soger officers will come

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your steady two 'oss men, their eyes to the 'ounds, their thoughts in the chase, regardless of who crams or who cranes. These generally wear cords, their viskers are greyish, and their brown top-boots look as if they have never been wite.

"The 'safe pilot' is generally a man with a broad back, clad in bottle-green with plain metal buttons, white neckcloth, striped veskit, drab kerseys, with ribbons danglin' over a 'hogany top; or may be in the scarlet coat of the 'unt, with a hash-plant, to denote that he is a gate-opener, and not a leaper: a man of this sort will pilot a youngster all day without ridin' over a fence. He knows every twist, every turn, every gate, every gap, in the country, and though sometimes appearin' to ride away from the 'ounds, by skirtin' and nickin', will often gain Reynard's p'int afore them—p'r'aps afore Reynard himself!

"We must not follow him, but 'streak it' across the country a bit, as brother Jonathan would say, and this is the time that, if ingenuous youth's 'oss has any monkey in him, he will assuredly get his dander up and show it. The commonest occurrence in all natur' is for him to run away, which is highly disagreeable. Geoffrey Gambado well observes, that when a man is well run away with, the first thing that occurs to him is how to stop his 'oss. Some will run him at a ditch, which is a werry promisin' experiment, if he leaps ill, or not at all: others try a gate-post, but it requires a nice eye to hit the centre with the 'oss's 'ead, so as not to graze your own leg. Frenchmen—and Frenchmen ride as well now as they did in Gambado's time—will ride against one another; and Geoffrey tells a good story of an ingenious Frenchman he saw make four experiments on Newmarket Heath, in only one of which he succeeded. His 'oss run away with him whilst Gimcrack was runnin' a match, and the Count's 'opes of stoppin' him being but small, he contrived to turn him across the course and rode slap at Gimcrack, 'opin' to effect it by a broadside; but Gimcrack was too quick for the Count, and he missed his aim. He then made full at Lord March, but unluckily only took him slantin'; baffled in his second attempt, the Count relied on the Devil's Ditch as a certain check to his



MR. JORROCKS ON THE PLATFORM.

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caræer, but his 'oss carried him clean over; and had not the rubbin'-house presented itself, the Count asserted he werily believed he should soon have reached London. Dashin' at the rubbin'-house with true French spirit, he produced the desired effect; his 'oss, not being able to proceed, stopped, and that so suddenly that Ducrow himself would have kissed his own sawdust. The Count, it is true, came off but tolerably well; the 'oss broke his 'ead and the Count likewise, so that accordin' to the opinion of two negatives making an affirmative, little or no 'arm was done, an ingenious, if not a satisfactory, mode of disposin' of damage.

“And here let me observe, that to 'unt pleasantly two things are necessary—to know your 'oss and to know your own mind. An 'oss is a queer critter. In the stable, on the road, or even in a green lane, he may be all mild and hamiable—jest like a gal you're a-courtin' of—but when he gets into the matrimony of the 'unting-field among other nags, and sees th' 'ounds, which always get their danders up, my vig! it's another pair of shoes altogether, as we say in France. Howsomever, if you know your 'oss and can depend upon him, so as to be sure he will carry you over whatever you put him at, have a good understandin' with yourself afore ever you come to a leap, whether you mean to go over it or not, for nothing looks so pusillanimous as to see a chap ride bang at a fence as though he would eat it, and then swerve off for a gate or a gap. Better far to charge wiggorously, and be chucked over by the 'oss stoppin' short, for the rider may chance to light on his legs, and can look about unconsarnedly, as though nothing particklar had 'appened. I'm no advocate for leapin', but there are times when it can't be helped, in which case let a man throw his 'eart fearlessly over the fence and follow it as quick as ever he can, and being well landed, let him thank Providence for his luck, and lose no time in lookin' for the best way out. Thus he will go on from leap to leap, and from field to field, rejoicin'; and havin' got well over the first fence, it's 'stonishin' 'ow fearlessly he charges the next. Some take leapin'-powder—spirits of some sort—but it's a contemptible practice, unworthy of ingenuous youth.

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“The finest receipt, however, for makin’ men ride is shakin’ a sportin’ hauthor afore them at startin’. Crikey! ’ow I’ve seen ’em streak across country so long as he remained in sight! Coves wot wouldn’t face a water-furrow if they had had their own way, under the impulse of glory will actually spur their steeds!

“Gentlemen wot take their ideas of ’unting from Mr. Hacker-mann’s pictor-shop in Regent’s Street, must have rum notions of the sport. There you see red laps flying out in all directions, and ’osses apparently to be had for catchin’. True, that in ’unting men will roll about—but so they will on the road; and I’d rayther have two bumps in a field than one on a pike. Danger is everywhere! An accomplished frind o’ mine says, ‘*Impendet omnibus periculum*’—Danger ’angs over an omnibus; and ‘*Mors omnibus est communis*,’—You may break your neck in an *omnibus*: but are we, on that account, to shun the vehicle of which the same great scholar says, ‘*Wirtus parvo pretio licet ab omnibus*,’—Wirtue may ride cheap in an omnibus? Surely not!

“Still, a fall’s a hawful thing. Fancy a great sixteen ’and ’oss lying on one like a blanket, or sittin’ with his monstrous hemispheres on one’s chest, sendin’ one’s werry soul out o’ one’s nostrils! Dreadful thought! Vere’s the brandy?” Hereupon Mr. Jorrocks again retired to the back of the platform to compose his nerves.

“Now, my beloved ’earers,” continued he, returning and wiping his mouth on the back of his hand—“Now, my beloved ’earers, let’s draw on old Peter for a run, for I really think a good suck of ’im is a’most as good as a tuck-out at the Ship and Turtle Tavern.

“Here we ’ave ’im,” continued Mr. Jorrocks, opening at the place, and proceeding to read with all due energy and emphasis; “‘Mind, *Galloper*, ’ow he leads them! It’s difficult to ’stinguish which is first, they run in such good style; yet *he* is the foremost ’ound. The goodness of his nose is not less excellent than his speed:—’ow he carries the scent! and when he loses it, see ’ow eagerly he flings to recover it again! There—now he’s at ’ead

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again! See 'ow they top the 'edge! Now, now they mount the 'ill!—Observe wot a 'ead they carry; and show me, if thou canst, one shuffler or shirker 'mongst 'em all; are they not like a parcel of brave fellows, who, when they 'gage in an undertakin', determine to share its fatigue and its dangers equally 'mongst 'em?'

"Capital!" exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks, smacking his lips. "Excellent indeed. That's jest precisely like my 'ounds.

"Dash my vig, if I could but get a clever feller like Leech to draw me a panorama o' the chase, with all my beauties goin' like beans—'eads up and sterns down, and a lot o' trumps ridin' as they should do—near enough to 'ear their sweet music, but not too near to prevent their swingin' and spreadin' like a rocket to make their own cast, I'd—I'd—I'd—bowl Halbert Smith and his wite mountain and his black box right down Sin Jimses street into the Thames, and set hup i' the 'Giptian 'All myself." (Great laughter and applause.) When it subsided, Mr. Jorrocks, returning to his volume, said,—

"Peter now does a little potry, and we'll do ditto. Here it is:—

—— " ' Far o'er the rocky 'ills we range,
And dangerous our course; but in the brave
True courage never fails. In wain the stream
In foamin' eddies whirls, in wain the ditch
Wide gapin' threatens death. The craggy steep,
Where the poor dizzy shepherd crawls with care,
And clings to every twig, gives us no pain;
But down we sweep, as stoops the falcon bold
To pounce his prey. Then hup the opponent 'ill
By the swift motion slung, we mount aloft;
So ships i' winter seas now slidin' sink
Adown the steepy wave, then tossed on 'igh
Ride on the billows and defy the storm.'

"That's capital, too," observed Mr. Jorrocks, conning the matter over, "werry superior readin', indeed, but some'ow or other, I thinks I likes old Peter better; it comes more nattural like. 'Ere, for instance, is a bit o' fine sportin' scenery, that makes one feel all over, 'unting like."

Mr. Jorrocks then read as follows:—

" ' It was then the fox I saw, as we came down the 'ill;—

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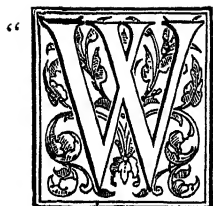
those crows directed me which way to look, and the ship ran from 'im as he passed along. The 'ounds are now on the werry spot, yet the ship stop them not, for they dash beyond them. Now see with wot heagerness they cross the plain!—*Gallop*er no longer keeps his place; *Brush*er takes it—see 'ow he flings for the scent, and 'ow impetuously he runs! 'Ow heagerly he took the lead, and 'ow he strives to keep it. Yet Wictor comes hup apace. He reaches 'im! See wot an excellent race it is between them! It is doubtful which will reach the cover first. 'Ow equally they run! 'Ow heagerly they strain! Now Wictor—Wictor!—Ah Brusher, you are beaten; Wictor first tops the 'edge. See there! See 'ow they all take in their strokes! The 'edge cracks with their weight, so many jump at once.'

"Capital, indeed," exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks; "most excellent, I may say. All sheer 'unting—no nasty jealous stipple chase ridin', 'urryin' 'ounds a mile beyond the scent. No '*go alongs*! there are three couple of 'ounds on the scent,' but real 'Fox et preteria nihil,' as Hego would say. Blow me tight, if such readin' doesn't parfectlie bust me," added he, again retiring to the brandy, amidst the loud and long-continued applause of the company.

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CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE LECTOR RESUMED.



“WELL now,” continued Mr. Jorrocks, returning, rubbing his lips preparatory to resuming his reading, “Peter does a bit o’ cunnin’, and I’ll elucidate it. The fox you know’s i’ cover—Rashworth or ’Igh Wood Grove, let us say, and the thing is to take care that he doesn’t slip away unseen—upon this Peter says, ‘Now ’astes the wipper-in to the other side o’ the cover; he is right unless he ’ead the fox.’ That’s capital,” observed Mr. Jorrocks—“he’s right unless he’s wrong; right one day p’r’aps, and wrong another, for he can’t control the fox, who may fancy to break at one pint one day and another the next. Howsomever,” mused our master, “that shows the advantage o’ havin’ some one to blow hup when things go wrong, and Cook—I think it is, who tells of an M. F. H., who kept a wip on purpose to be blown hup, and who he used to make ride alongside any ‘go along’—there are three couple of ’ounds on the scent cove, while the M. F. H. lectord the man as if he had committed the ‘fore-paw,’ adding at the end, with a frown and a shake of his vip, (bad word) ‘ye, sir, I may (bad word) *you*, at all ewents!’ (Laughter and applause.)

“But come, let’s see wot our hauthor makes on ’im in cover,” resumed Mr. Jorrocks, returning to his Beckford—“Peter’s at the potry again, I declare,” said he, clearing his throat for the following :—

“‘Eavens! wot melodious strains! ’ow beat our ’earts
Big with tumultuous joy! the loaded gales
Breathe ’armony; and as the tempest drives
From wood to wood, thro’ ev’ry dark recess
The forest thunders, and the mountains shake.’

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“Werry fine!” exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks, turning up his eyes to the sporting looping of his canopy, “werry fine indeed! ‘The forest thunders, and the mountains shake.’ That’s jest wot my beauties make them do. Dash my vig, but they kick hup a pretty dust when they once begin. But let us follow Peter into cover, for if his country was anything like wot it is now, he’d be pretty much at ‘ome in one I reckon.” Mr. Jorrocks then read as follows:—“‘Listen! the ‘ounds have turned. They are now i’ two parts: the fox has been ‘eaded back.’ The wip’s been wrong,” observed Mr. Jorrocks, with a shake of his head, “or,” continuing his reading, “‘we have changed at last.’ Changed at last,” repeated Mr. Jorrocks, sorrowfully. “Bad luck to those changes,” observed he, “they are the werry deuce and all in ‘unting. Arter one’s ridden oneself red-’ot, and nearly galloped one’s oss’s tail off, and think it’s full time to be ‘andlin’ the warmint, to ‘ave a gen’l’mán goin’ away as fresh as a four-year-old. Dash my buttons, but I remembers a desp’rate cunnin’ Charley,” observed Mr. Jorrocks, “that used to go away from Ticklefield-gos, in Crampshire, and arter runnin’ a wide ring, would return and pashin’ hup another fox, would lie quiet hisself. As it happened, ‘owever, his substitute was a mangey one, and desp’rate disgusted we used to be at findin’ we were ridin’ arter a thing like a rat ‘stead of a beautiful clean-furred Reynard.

“But Peter,” says Mr. Jorrocks, “‘opes to ‘old on with the ‘unted fox, and this is wot he says to his Ben”—Mr. Jorrocks reading—“‘Now, my lad, mind the ‘untsman’s ‘alloo, and stop to those ‘ounds which he encourages,’—which doesn’t mean that the vip’s to make a haffidavit that that’s the ‘untsman’s ‘alloo,” continued he, looking knowingly at Ben, for a reason which will appear in Mr. Jorrocks’s Journal, “but that he’s to stop all such ‘ounds as are not runnin’ the way the ‘untsman’s ‘ollooin’; he’s to maintain to the ‘untsman’s ‘olloo in short, and stop sich ‘ounds as diwide from it,” explained Mr. Jorrocks.

“Well, let’s ‘ave that sentence over again,” said he, referring to his volume.

“‘Now, my lad, mind the ‘untsman’s halloo, and stop to

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those 'ounds which he encourages.' He is right! that doubtless is the 'unted fox;—that doubtless is the 'unted fox," repeated Mr. Jorrocks, thoughtfully—"ay," added he, "they're all the 'unted foxes that anybody sees. Howsomever, we'll take Peter's word for it, and at 'im again. Well now," continued the worthy lecturer, conning the page, "'ere's a reg'lar yard and a 'alf of potry, describin', wot Pomponious would call the 'second bust a'most as terrible as the fust'—the difference atwixt Peter and Pompey, ye see, bein'," added Mr. Jorrocks, looking off the book, "that Peter is all for the pack, and Pompey for the performers, or 'customers,' as they call the crack riders i' the cut-me-downs. Howsomever," continued Mr. Jorrocks, reverting to the poetry, "it's a prime sample of a sportin' scurry, and if I shalln't be fatiguein' on ye, I'll spout it." (Cries of "No, no, go on; go on," and applause.)

Our great master then read as follows:—

" 'Wot lengths we pass! were will the wanderin' chace
Lead us bewildered! smooth as swallows skim
The new shorn mead, and far more swift we fly.
See my brave pack; 'ow to the 'ead they press,
Jostlin' i' close array, then more diffuse
Obliquely weel, wile from their hopenin' mouths
The wolloid thunder breaks—
————— Look back and view
The strange confusion of the wale below,
Where sore wexation reigns; —————
————— Old age laments
His wigour spent; the tall, plump, brawny youth
Cusses his cumbrous bulk and envies now
The short pygmean race, he whilom kenn'd
With proud insultin' leer. A chosen few
Alone the sport enjoy, nor droop beneath
Their pleasin' toils.' "

Great applause followed the reading of the above. When it subsided, our master, taking the "Chase and Road" volume from the table at the back of the platform, said "Let us just take a peep at frind Pomponious under similar circumstances. 'The squire's 'ounds are runnin' with a brest-'igh scent over the cream of the cut-me-down country, and most musically do the light notes o' Wocal and Wenus fall on the ear of those who may be within reach to catch 'em. But who is so fortunate



"HOLD HARD? EASIER SAID THAN DONE."

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i' this second bust 'nearly as terrible as the fust?' asks Hego. 'Our fancy supplies us again,' says he, 'and we think we could name 'em all. If we look to the left, nearly abreast o' the pack, we see six men goin' gallantly, and quite as straight as the 'ounds themselves are goin'; and on the right are four more, ridin' equally well, though the former 'ave rayther the best of it, owin' to 'avin 'ad the inside o' the 'ounds, at the last two turns, which must be placed to the chapter of haccidents. A short way i' the rear, by no means too much so to enjoy this brilliant run, are the rest o' the *élite* o' the field, who had come hup at the fust check; and a few who, thanks to the goodness o' their steeds, and their determination to be with the 'ounds, appear as if dropped from the clouds. Some, 'owever, begin to show symptoms o' distress. Two 'osses are seen loose in the distance—a report is flyin' 'bout that one o' the field is badly 'urt, and somethin' is 'eard of a collar-bone bein' broken, others say it is a leg; but the pace is *too good* to inquire. A crackin' o' rails is now 'eard, and one gen'l'man's 'oss is to be seen restin', nearly balanced, 'cross one on 'em, his rider bein' on his back i' the ditch, which is on the landin'-side. 'Who is he?' says Lord Brudenel to Jack Stevens. 'Can't tell, my lord; but I thought it was a queerish place when I came o'er it afore 'im.' It is evidently a place o' peril, but the case is *too good* to 'ford help.'

"So," continued Mr. Jorrocks, closing the volume with a clap, and chucking it to Pigg in the background, "they cut 'im down, but *don't* 'ang 'im up to dry." (Laughter and applause.)

"'OLD 'ARD!" now exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks at the top of his voice, advancing to the front of the platform, causing silence throughout the room. "'OLD 'ARD!" repeated he, holding up his hand; "appallin' sound!" added he, mournfully, "fearful to the forrard, and dispiritin' to all. Now's the time that the M. F. H., if he has any mischief in him and 'appens to be hup, will assuredly let drive at some one.

"'OLD 'ARD,' explained the worthy lecturer, "means that gen'l'men are to stop their 'osses, a thing easier said than done,

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sometimes. Then if any troublesome stranger, or unpunctual payer, appears to be forrard, he is sure to catch it.

“ ‘Thank you, Mr. Red Veskit!’ or, ‘I’m much obleged to that gen’l’mán with the big calves for overridin’ *my* ’ounds!—werry *much* ’bleged to him!—most ’ticklarly ’bleged to him!—most confoundedly ’bleged to him!—G——d d——d ’bleged to him!—*Wish the devil had him*, big calves and all!’

“ Meanwhile the ’untsman makes his cast, that’s to say, trots his ’ounds in a circle round where they threw up: ‘threw up’ doesn’t mean womitin’, mind, but standin’ starin’ with their ’eads up, instead of keepin’ them down, tryin’ for the scent. As this is a critical moment, young gen’l’mén should refrain from inwitin’ the ’untsmen or whips to follow them over gates or dangerous leaps. All should be ’tentive. A cast is a thing to criticise, on the principle of the looker-on seein’ the most of the game. If there are no big fences in the way, and the ’untsman knows how far the ’ounds ran with a scent, he will probably hit it off pretty soon. That will be science.

“ If the leaps are large, he may not be so lucky, and then Mr. Red Veskit, or the gen’l’mán with the big calves, will catch it again.

“ Should any one ’int that they have seen a better cast, little buoys will go home and tell their ma’s they don’t think much of Jack Jones, and Jack’s character will begin to go. A fish-fag’s ware isn’t more perishable than an ’untsman’s fame; his skill is within the judgment of every one—‘Cleverest feller alive!’—‘Biggest fool goin’!’

“ But to the run! The *Chass* I sing! A run is either a *buster*—elbows and legs throughout—or it is sharp at first, and slow arterwards; or it is slow at first and sharp arterwards. The first is wot most frequently finishes the fox; and when every ’ound owns the scent, unless Old Reynard does the hartful dodge, by lyin’ down in an ’edge-row, or skulkin’ among cattle or ship, in all humane probability his life arn’t worth twenty minutes’ purchase from the find.

“ The second class run—sharp at first, and slow arterwards—is the most favourable to the fox; for the longer it lasts, the

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slower the 'ounds go, until they get to wot the old Agony coachmen used to call Parliament-pace—that is to say, some six miles an 'our, when they are either run out o' scent, or a big 'are jumps up afore them, and leads them astray. It's then, '*Ware 'are, Wenus! Wictory, for shame!*' and off 'ome.

"The third class—slow at first, and sharp arterwards—is hawkward for the fox, but good for beginners, for they get warm in the progress, instead of being choked at the start. The thing improves, jest like a hice-cream i' the eatin'.

"No two men 'gree upon the merits of a run 'less they 'appen to be the only ones to see it, when they arrange wot one says t'other shall swear to; your real jealous buoys can't bear to see many at the finish. In relatin' a run to an absent friend, it is always allowable to lay on fifty per cent. for presence.

"Talking of a run, ingenuous youth should speak in praise of the 'ead the 'ounds carried. This doesn't mean that they ran with an 'ead of no sort in their mouths, but that they packed well together, and each strived to be first. It is this wot distinguishes a real pack of fox-'ounds from your trencher-fed muggars, and constitutes the charm o' the chase. If the death of a fox be all that's desired, a gun will do the business much cleaner and better than Muggin's and Co.'s towlers.

"What looks so contemptible as a stringin' lot of towlin' beggars toilin' in long line over the 'eavy fallows, and the fox gettin' knocked on the 'ead because the dogs are too tired to kill him themselves? Out upon sich outrages! say I. But to the legitimate run.

"Not bein' in at the death is reckoned slow, and numerous are the excuses of defaulters—losin' a shoe is one of the commonest; assistin' a friend in trouble, another; 'oss fallin' lame, a third; thrown out in turnin' 'ounds, a fourth; anything but the real one—want o' nerve. Nerve means pluck: in Alderman Harley's time, they called it courage. Still, it's quite lawful for men to 'unt, even though they won't ride over the moon. 'Deed you might as well say that a man has no business at Hepsom who can't ride a race as that a man has no business at an 'unt that won't undertake to be in at the death. Let

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every man do his best, and grind away as long as he can ; at all ewents, until either he or his 'oss tire, or he gets thrown out, in which latter calamity let 'im remember the mustard pot, and not go ridin' straight an end, as if it were impossible for the 'ounds to turn to the right or to the left. Let him pull hup a bit on a risin' ground, and as he sits moppin' his nob, let 'im examine the landscape, and see wot cattle are starin' or scampering about, and rely upon it, the 'ounds are not far off. If ingenuous youth, after ridin' the line, sees 'osses bein' led about a green field, and red coats standin' in a ring, he may conclude bold Reynard is capevi'd, and, by quickenin' his pace, may steal quietly in afore the worry.

" But we'll let old Peter kill his fox, for dash my vig, there's nobody can do it like him. Let's see, where was I ? " continued Jorrocks, resuming that volume—" Ah, I have it, the fox has been 'eaded, or they have changed at last.—' Now for a moment's patience ! " cries Peter,—' We press too close upon the 'ounds ! 'Untsman, stand still ! as they want you not. 'Ow admirably they spread ! 'Ow wide they cast ! Is there a single 'ound that does not try ? if there be ne'er shall he 'unt again. There *Trueman* is on the scent—he feathers, yet still is doubtful—'tis right ! 'ow readily they join 'im ! See those wide-casting 'ounds, 'ow they fly forrard to recover the ground they 'ave lost ! Mind *Lightnin'*, 'ow she dashes ; and *Mungo*, 'ow he works ! Old *Frantic*, too, now pushes forrard ; she knows as well as we, the fox is sinkin' :—

—— " ' Ah ! he flies, nor yields
To black despair. But one loose more and all
His wiles are wain. 'Ark ! thro' yon willage now
The rattlin' clamour rings. The barns, the cots,
And leafless elms return the joyous sounds.
Thro' ev'ry 'ome-stall, and thro' ev'ry yard,
His midnight walks, pantin', forlorn, he flies.'

" And, dash my vig, he makes me pant, too," continued Mr. Jorrocks, holding his obese sides. " However, judicious Peter gives one a little breathin' time here, in these convenient words :—

" ' 'Untsman ! at fault at last ? 'Ow far did you bring the

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scent? 'Ave the 'ounds made their cast? Now make yours—you see that ship-dog as coursed the fox; get forrard with your 'ounds, and make a wide cast,' during which time," continued the worthy lecturer, "we are all s'posed to be sittin' quietly givin' our quads the wind, and all 'oldin' our tongues—a most desirable thing," observed Mr. Jorrocks, looking knowingly round the room.

"Peter, who 'as his ears well cocked with an 'and behind the right one," continued the worthy lecturer, "gives tongue with—

"'Ark! that halloo is indeed a lucky one. If we can 'old 'im on, we may yet recover 'im; for a fox, so much distressed, must stop at last. We shall now see if they will 'unt as well as run; for there is but little scent, and the himpendin' cloud still makes that little less. 'Ow they enjoy the scent! see 'ow busy they all are, and 'ow each in his turn prewails!'

"Capital writin'!" exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks; "feels for all the world as if I was there. Now for a bunch of 'ints for an 'untsman!

"'Untsman! be quiet! Whilst the scent was good, you pressed on your 'ounds; it was well done; when you came to a check, you stood still and interrupted them not; they were arterwards at fault; you made your cast with judgment and lost no time—you now must let 'em 'unt!—with such a cold scent as this you can do no good; they must do it all themselves; lift 'em now, and not an 'ound will stoop again. Ha! a 'igh road at sich a time as this, when the tenderest-nosed 'ound can 'ardly own the scent; 'ave a little patience, and let 'em for once try back.'

"Oh, that weary scent!" exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks; "that weary, incomprehensible, incontrollable phenomenon! 'Constant only in its inconstancy!' as the hable hauthor of the noble science well said. Believe me, my beloved 'earers," continued Mr. Jorrocks, "there's nothin' so queer as scent, 'cept a woman! (Hisses, mingled with laughter and applause.)

"'Ark to Beckford!" exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks, resuming his reading as the noise subsided. "'We now must give 'em time:

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—see where they bend towards yonder furze brake. I wish he may 'ave stopped there! Mind that old 'ound, 'ow he dashes o'er the furze; I think he winds 'im. Now for a fresh *en tapis*! 'Ark! they 'alloo! Aye, there he goes.'

"Pop goes the weasel again!" exclaimed Mr. Jorrocks, straddling and working his arms, as if he were riding. He then resumed his reading.

"'It is nearly over with 'im; had the 'ounds caught view, he must ha' died. He will 'ardly reach the cover; see 'ow they gain upon 'im at every stroke! It is an admirable race! yet the cover saves 'im.

"'Now be quiet, and he cannot 'scape us; we 'ave the wind o' the 'ounds, and cannot be better placed: 'ow short he runs! he is now in the werry strongest part o' the cover. Wot a crash! every 'ound is in, and every 'ound is runnin' 'im. That was a quick turn! Again, another! he's put to his last shifts. Now *Mischief* is at his 'eels, and death is not far off. Ha! they all stop at once; all silent, and yet no hearth is hopen. Listen! now they are at him agin! Did you 'ear that 'ound catch 'im! they overran the scent, and the fox had laid down be'ind 'em. Now Reynard, look to yourself! 'Ow quick they all give their tongues! Little *Dreadnought*, 'ow he works 'im! the terriers, too, they are now squeakin' at 'im! 'Ow close *Wengeance* pursues! 'ow terribly she presses! it is jest up with 'im! Gods! wot a crash they make; the 'ole wood resounds! That turn was werry short! There! now! aye, now they 'ave 'im! WHO-HOOP!' "

Here Mr. Jorrocks put his finger in his ear, and gave a "Who-hoop!" that shook the very rafters of the room, which being responded to by the party, a noise was created that is more easily imagined than described.

Three cheers for Mr. Jorrocks were then called for, and given with such vehemence as to amount to nine times nine, and one cheer more, during which the worthy master kept bowing and scraping on the platform, until he got a crick in his neck from the exercise.

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CHAPTER XXXIV.

MR. JORROCKS'S JOURNAL.



FEW more extracts from our distinguished friend's journal will perhaps best put our readers in possession of the nature of the sport with his hounds, and doings generally, though being written on loose sheets of paper, and sometimes not very legible, we have had some little difficulty in deciphering it. Indeed, what appear to have been the best runs—especially those with a kill—are invariably the worst written, owing perhaps to our friend indulging in a third pint of port on what he calls “qualified days.”

On one occasion he seems to have been writing his journal and a letter to his traveller, Mr. Bugginson, together, and to have put into the journal what was meant for the traveller, and most likely sent to the traveller what was meant for the journal. However, our readers shall have it as we find it, and we will endeavour to supply any little deficiencies from such other sources as are open to us.

Mr. Jorrocks would seem to have had another bye-day with Ben while Pigg's clothes were making, when Ben did not cut any better figure than he did on the boiled lobster one. Having got the hounds into cover, as soon as ever Mr. Jorrocks began to yoicks and cheer, and crack his whip, exhorting the hounds to “*rout 'im out!*” and “*pash 'im up!*” Ben stood erect in his stirrups, and made the following proclamation, to the great amusement of the field:—

“*I maintain that's the old'un's holloo!*” “*I maintain that's the*

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old 'un's holloo!” repeated he. “*I maintain that's the old 'un's holloo!*” he added for the third time, as he reseated himself in his saddle, and scuttled away to astonish another group of sportsmen with a similar declaration.

Mr. Jorrocks adds to his confused note of the transaction:—
“Incorrigible bouy! Good mind to stuff him full o’ Melton dinner pills, and see if they will give him any knowledge o’ the chase.”

He also seems to have had several “bye” and other days at “Pinch-me-near” Forest, when a light-coloured fox beat him so often as to acquire the name of the “old customer.” We see on chronicling his losings generally, he adds the words—“the musciful man is musciful to his fox”—just as if he could have killed him if he chose. That, of course, our readers will believe as much of as they like. We shouldn’t like to be a fox with old J. at our brush.

Some of his runs appear to have been severe, at least if we may judge by the entries of money paid for “catching my ’oss” —“stoppin’ my ’oss”—and “helpin’ me on to my ’oss”—which our worthy friend enters with the most scrupulous accuracy.

The following is our master’s minute of his opening day:—

“*Wednesday*.—Round of beef and carrots—momentous crisis—first public day as an M. F. H.—morning fine, rather frosty—there betimes—landlord polite—many foot-folks—large field—Romeo Simpkins on Sontag—Captain Slack on Bull Dog—Miss Wells on Fair Rosamond—great many captains—found soon—ringin’ beggar—ran three rounds, and accounted for him by losin’ him—found again—a ditto with a ditto finish—good for the foot-folks—home at four—musciful man is musciful to the foxes. Paid for catching my ’oss, 6*d*.

“Found two petitions. One from Joshua Peppercorn prayin’ his honour the M. F. H. to subscribe to reinstate him in a cart ’oss, his own havin’ come to an untimely end of old age. Says the M. F. H.’s always subscribe. Replied as follows:—

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“‘M. F. H. John Jorrocks presents his compliments to Mr. Joshua Peppercorn, and is sorry to hear of the death of his prad, but the M. F. H. ’as enough to do to mount himself and his men without subscribin’ to find other folks i’ quads.

“‘DIANA LODGE.’

“Margaret Lucas had her patent mangle seized for rent and arrears of rent, and ’opes the master of the fox-dogs will do somethin’ towards redeeming it. Wrote as follows:—

“‘M. F. H. John Jorrocks presents his compliments to Mrs. Margaret Lucas, and is sorry to ’ear of the sitivation of her patent mangle, but the M. F. H. having laid it down as a rule never to subscribe to redeem patent mangles, can’t depart from it in her case.’

“People seem to think M. F. H.’s have nothin’ to do but give away tin. You know one a’n’t quite sure her mother mayn’t have *sold* her mangle! Besides, if I mistake not, this is one of the saucy jades wot laughed at me when I came ’ome with a dirty back.

“*Mountain Daisy*.—Saturday, and few farmers out.—Not many pinks, but three soger officers, two of them mounted by Duncan Nevin—a guinea and a ’alf a day each, and ’alf a guinea for a hack. Drew Slaughterford, and up to the Cloud Quarries.—Priestess seemed to think she had a touch of a fox in the latter, but could make nothin’ on’t.—Trotted down to Snodbury Gorse—wants enclosin’—cattle get in. No sooner in, than out came a pig, then came a fox, then another pig—then another fox.—Got away with last fox, and ran smartly down to Coombe, where we was headed by a hedger, and we never crossed his line again.—Found a second fox in Scotland Wood—a three-legger—soon disposed of him.—Found a third in Dulverton Bog, who ran us out of light and scent; stopped the ’ounds near Appledove.—Pigg says Charley Stobbs ‘coup’d his creels’ over an ’edge.—Scotch for throwin’ a somersault, I understands.—Paid for catchin’ my ’oss, 6*d*.”

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We also glean from the journal that Mr. Jorrocks allowed Pigg to cap when they killed ; but Pigg, not finding that process so productive as he wished, hit upon the following novel expedient for raising the wind :—Seeing that a great many young gentlemen appeared at the meet who never attempted to get to the finish, Pigg constituted himself a sort of Insurance Company, and issued tickets against hunting accidents—similar to what railway companies issue against railway ones. By these he undertook for a shilling a day, or five shillings the season, to insure gentlemen against all the perils and dangers of the chase—broken necks, broken backs, broken limbs, broken heads, and even their horses against broken knees.

Indeed, he went further than this, and we have been told by parties who were present and heard him, that he would send Ben among the outsiders at the meets, singing out, “ Take your tickets, gents ! please take your tickets ! goin’ into a hawful country—desperate bull finchers ! yawnin’ ditches ! rails that’ll nouter brick nor bend ! Old ’un got his monkey full o’ brandy ! ” by which means, and occasionally by dint of swearing he’d “ ride over some of them if he caught them down,” Pigg managed to extract a good deal of money.

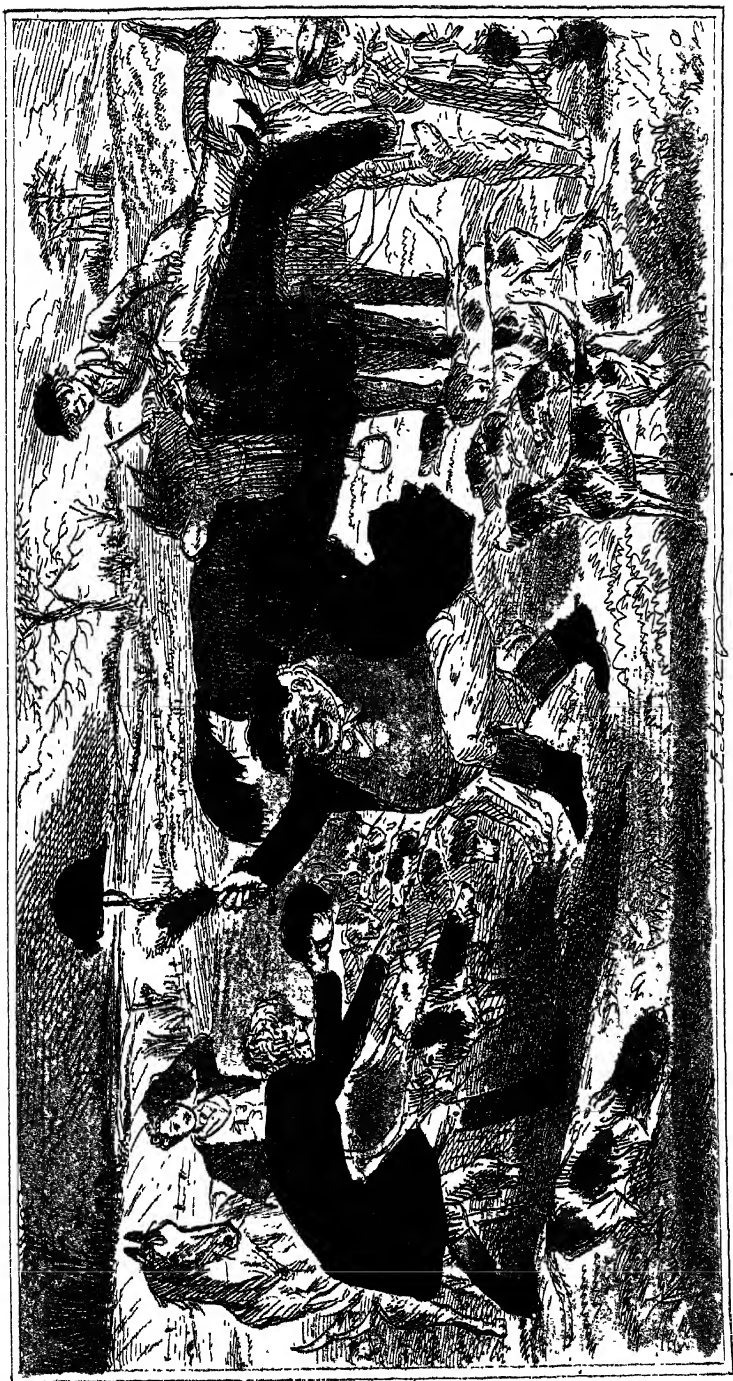
Mr. Jorrocks, we may observe, seems to have been in the habit of filling his sherry flask with brandy when going into a stiff country—a thing of very frequent occurrence with our friend.

The following is the mixed entry between the traveller and the trespasser, if we may so call the fox—which we present as a true copy—“ errors excepted,” as they say in the City :—

“ When you go to ‘ Alifax, you’ll most likely see Martin Proudfoote, of Sharpset Hill. This cove’s father bit me uncommon ’ard a’most the first journey I ever took, when a great stupid flock o’ sheep made slap for the gate, and reg’larly stopped the way, there being no way out ’cept over a most impossible, ‘ cart-rendin’ ’edge, with a ditch big enough to ’old a cathedral church, which give the infatuated fox considerable advantage
* * (illegible) * * for he had got early information that sugar had riz. * * (illegible) * * there being only 3000

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and odd bags of Mauritius, at from 29s. to 32s. for brown, and summut like the same quantity o' wite Benares, and though * * (blot, and illegible) * * we found 'im at the extremity of our wale country, and ran 'im for more nor an hour at a rattlin' pace through the entire length o' the grass-land, and then away for the open downs, crossin' the river near the mill at Floater-heels, the 'ounds castin' hup and down the banks to satisfy themselves the fox was not on their side, then returnin' to the point to which they 'ad carried the scent, they all dashed in like a row o' buoys bathin', so (something wiped out with his finger—then half a line illegible). You must just do as you can about coffees, for I can't possibly be always at your helbow to cast you, but be careful o' the native Ceylon, and don't give above 48s. per cwt. for good ordinary . . I'd be sweeter on either Mocha or Rio, for it isn't possible to see a better or truer line 'unter than old Factor, or one that I should 'ave less 'esitation in usin' as a stud-'ound, though some may say his flat feet are agin 'im, but 'andsome is wot 'andsome does, and I'll always speak well o' the bridge wot carries me over, so tell Fairlips it's all gammon sayin' the last sugars we sent him were not equal to sample—and that his customers can be no judges of quality or they wouldn't say so. Tell him always to show an inferior sample first, and always to show wite sugars on blue paper—but if the man's to be taught the first rudiments of his trade, it's time he gave hup 'unting the country, for things can't be done now as they used in old Warde and Sam Nichol's time, when men fed their 'osses on new oats, and didn't care to look into their pedigrees, and nothin' but a fiat i' bankruptcy will teach sich a chap wisdom, and in course the lighter we ride in his books the better, for givin' away one's goods is a most absurd prodigality, seasoned foxes bein' as necessary to sport as experienced 'ounds—for you may rely upon it if we seek for comfort here below, it will only be found in a 'ound and a pettikit; and wotever they may say about the merits of a slight dash o' chicory in coffee, there's more wirtue in the saddle than in all the doctors' bottles put together, so I'd have nothin' wotever to do with cheap tea—and beware of supplyin' any of the advertisin'chaps, for scent of



The Will, or The Cat & Custard Got Dazed

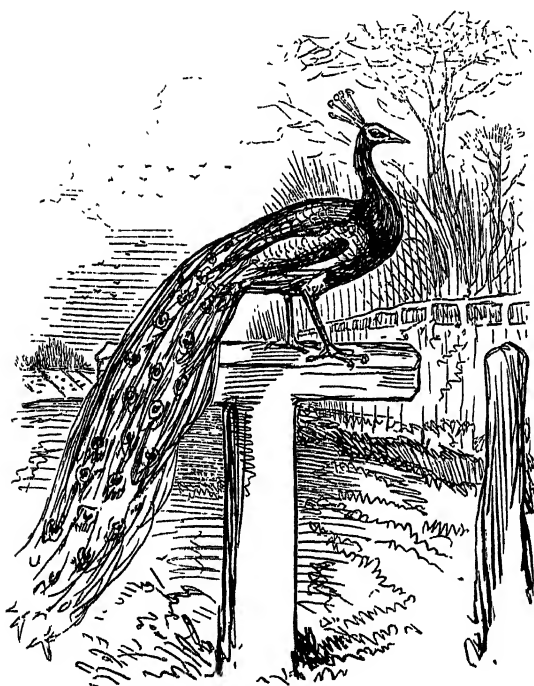
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all things is the most fluctuatin', and * * (illegible) there's nothin' so queer as scent 'cept a woman, and tradesmen undersellin', and 'ounds choppin' foxes in cover is more a proof of their wice.'"—(Inkstand apparently upset, making a black sea on the paper.)

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CHAPTER XXXV.

THE "CAT AND CUSTARD-POT" DAY.



A Stately Bird.

HE above day deserves a more extended notice than it receives in Mr. Jorrocks's journal. He writes that "somehow or other in shavin', he thought they'd 'ave mischief," and he went into the garden as soon as he was dressed to consult the prophet Gabriel Junks, so that he might take his pocket Siphonia in case it was likely to be wet,

but the bird was not there. Then just as he had breakfasted and was about ready for a start, young May, the grocer, sent him a horse to look at, and as "another gen'l'man" was waiting for the next offer of him Charley and Mr. Jorrocks stayed behind to try him, and after a hard deal, Mr.

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Jorrocks bought him for £30—which he makes a mem.: “to call £50.”

Meanwhile Pigg and Ben trotted on with the hounds, and when they reached the meet—the sign of the Cat and Custard-Pot, on the Muswell Road, they found an immense assemblage, some of whom greeted Pigg with the familiar inquiry, “What he’d have to drink?”

“Brandy!” replied Pigg, “brandy!” and tossing off the glass with great gusto, a second horseman volunteered one, then a third, then a fourth, then a fifth; for it is observable that there are people in the world will give away drink to any extent, who yet would be chary of offering either money or meat. Pigg, who as Mr. Jorrocks says in his journal, is only a *lulus naturæ*, or loose ‘un by natur’, tosses off glass after glass, smacking his lips and slapping his thigh, getting noisier and noisier with each succeeding potation. Now he would sing them a song, now he would take the odds ag’in Marley Hill, then he would tell them about Deavilboger’s farm, and how, but for his fore-elder John, John Pigg, ye see, willin’ his brass to the Formary ye see, he’d ha’ been a gen’l’mán that day and huntin’ his own hunds. Then as another glass made its appearance, he would take off his cap and halloo out at the top of his voice, making the hounds stare with astonishment, “*Keep the tambourine a-rowlin’!*” adding as he tossed it off, “*Brandy and baccy ’ill gar a man live for iver!*” And now when he was about at the noisiest, with his cap turned peak backwards, and the tobacco juice simmering down the deeply indented furrows of his chin, our master and Charley appear in the distance, jogging on, not too quickly for consequence, but sufficiently fast to show they are aware they are keeping the field waiting.

“Here he comes; here’s Jorrocks! here’s the old boy! here’s Jackey at last!” runs through the meeting, and horsemen begin to arrange themselves for the reception.

“A—a—a sink!” exclaims Pigg, shaking his head, blinking and staring that way, “here’s canny ard sweetbreeks hiss!” adding with a slap of his thigh as the roar of laughter the

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exclamation produced subsided, “*A—a—a*, but ar de like to see his feulish ard feace a-grinnin’ in onder his cap!”

“How way, canny man; how way!” now shouts Pigg, waving his hand as his master approached. “How way! canny man, how way! and give us a wag o’ thy neif,” Pigg extending his hand as he spoke.

Mr. Jorrocks drew up with great dignity, and placing his fist in his side, proceeded to reconnoitre the scene.

“*Humph!*” grunted he, “wot’s all this about?”

“Sink, but ar’ll gi’ thou a gob full o’ baccy,” continued James, nothing daunted by his master’s refusal of his hand. “Sink, but ar’ll gi’ thou a gob full o’ baccy,” repeated he, diving into his waistcoat pocket and producing a large steel tobacco box as he spoke.

Mr. Jorrocks signified his dissent by a chuck of his chin, and an ominous shake of the head.

“*A—a—a* man!” exclaimed Pigg, now changing his tone, “but ar’ll tell thee of a lass well worth her licks!”

“You deserve your *own*, sir, for getting so drunk,” observed Mr. Jorrocks, haughtily.

Pigg.—“Ar’s as sober as ye are, and a deal wizer!”

Jorrocks, angrily.—“I’ll not condescend to compare notes with ye!”

Pigg, now flaring up.—“Sink! if anybody ’ill had mar huss, ar’ll get off and fight him.”

Jorrocks, contemptuously.—“Better stick to the shop-board as long as you can.”

Pigg, ‘furious.—“Gin ar warn’t afeard o’ boggin’ mar neif, ard gi’ thou a good crack i’ thy kite!”

Jorrocks, with emphasis.—“*Haw—da—cious* feller. I’ll ’unt the ’ounds myself afore I’ll put hup with sich himperence!”

Pigg, throwing out his arms and grinning in ecstasies.—“Ar’ll be death of a guinea but arl coom and see thec!”

Jorrocks, looking indignantly round on the now mirth-convulsed company.—“Who’s made my Pigg so drunk?”

Nobody answered.

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"Didn't leave his sty so," muttered our master, lowering himself jockey-ways from his horse.

"'Old my quad," said he to Charley, handing him Arter-xerxes, "while I go in and see."

Our master then stumped in, and presently encountering the great attraction of the place—the beautiful Miss D'Oiley—asked her, with a smiling countenance, and a hand in a pocket, as if about to pay, "Wot his 'untsman 'ad 'ad?"

"Oh, sir, it is all paid," replied Miss D'Oiley, smiling as sweetly upon Jorrocks as she did on the generality of her father's customers, for she had no more heart than a punch-bowl.

"Is all paid?" muttered our friend.

"Yes, sir; each gentleman paid as he sent out the glass."

"*Humph!*" twigg'd Mr. Jorrocks, adding, with a grunt, "and that's wot these critters calls sport!"

Our master then stumped out. "Well, gen'l'men," exclaimed he, at the top of his voice off the horse-block, "I 'opes you're satisfied wi' your day's sport!—you've made my nasty Pigg as drunk as David's sow, so now you may all go 'ome, for I shalln't throw off; and as to you," continued our indignant master, addressing the now somewhat crestfallen Pigg, "you go 'ome too, and take off my garments, and take yourself off to your native mountains, for I'll see ye at Jericho ayont Jordan afore you shall 'unt my 'ounds," giving his thigh a hearty slap as he spoke.

"Wy, wy, sir," replied Pigg, turning his quid, "wy, wy, sir, ye ken best, only dinna ye try to hont them thysel'—*that's arle!*"

"There are as good fish i' the sea as ever came out on't!" replied Mr. Jorrocks, brandishing his big whip furiously; adding, "I'll see ye leadin' an old 'ooman's lap-dog 'bout in a string afore *you* shall 'unt 'em."

"No ye won't!" responded Pigg. "No ye won't! Arve ne carle te de nothin' o' the sort! Arve ne carle te de nothin' o' the sort!—Arle gan back to mar coosin Deavilbogers."

"You may gan to the devil himself," retorted Mr. Jorrocks,

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vehemently—"You may gan to the devil himself—I'll see ye sellin' small coals from a donkey-cart out of a quart pot afore you shall stay wi' me."

"Thou's a verra feulish, noisy, gobby, insufficient ard man!" retorted Pigg, and "Ar doesn't *regard thee*! No; AR DOESN'T REGARD THEE!" roared he, with a defiant flourish of his fist.

"You're a hignorant, hawdacious, rebellious rascal, and I'll see ye frightenin' rats from a barn wi' the bagpipes at a 'alfpenny a day, and findin' yourself, afore I'll 'ave anything more to say to ye," rejoined Mr. Jorrocks, gathering up his big whip as if for the fray.

"Sink, arle tak' and welt thee like an ard shoe, if thou gives me ony mair o' thy gob!" rejoined the now furious Pigg, ejecting his baccy and motioning as if about to dismount.

Jorrocks, thinking he had done enough, then took his horse from Charley Stobbs, and hoisting himself on like a great crate of earthenware, whistled his hounds away from the still stupified Pigg, who sat blinking and staring and shaking his head, thinking there were two Jorrockses on two Arterxerxes', two Bens, two Charley Stobbses, and something like five-and-forty couple of hounds.

The field remained behind praising Pigg and abusing Jorrocks, and declaring they would withdraw their subscriptions to the hounds if Pigg "got the sack." None of them would see Pigg want; and Harry Capper, more vehement than the rest, proposed an immediate subscription, a suggestion that had the effect of dispersing the field, who slunk off different ways as soon as ever the allusion to the pocket was made.

Jorrocks was desperately angry, for he had had an expensive "stop," and came bent on mischief. His confusion of mind made him mistake the road home, and go by Rumfiddler Green instead of Muswell Hill. He spurred, and cropped, and jagged Arterxerxes—now vowing that he would send him to the tanners when he got 'ome—now that he would have him in the boiler afore night. He was very much out of sorts with

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himself and everybody else—even the hounds didn't please him—always getting in his way, hanging back looking for James Pigg, and Ben had fine fun cutting and flopping them forrard.

Charley, like a wise man, kept aloof.

In this unamiable mood our master progressed, until the horrible apparition of a great white turnpike-gate, staring out from the gable end of a brick toll-house, startled his vision and caused him to turn short up a wide green lane to the left. "Take care o' the pence and the punds 'ill take care o' theirsels," muttered our master to himself, now sensible that he had mistaken his road, and looking around for some landmark to steer by. Just as he was identifying White Choker Church in the distance, a sudden something shot through the body of the late loitering indifferent hounds, apparently influencing them with a sort of invisible agency. Another instant, and a wild snatch or two right and left, ended in a whimper and a general shoot up the lane.

"*A fox!* for a 'underd!" muttered our master, drawing breath as he eyed them. "*A fox!* for two-and-twenty 'underd!" continued he, as Priestess feathered but spoke not.

"*A fox!* for a million!" roared he, as old Ravager threw his tongue lightly but confidentially, and Jorrocks cheered him to the echo.

"*A fox!* for 'alf the national debt!" roared he, looking round at Charley as he gathered himself together for a start.

Now as Jorrocks would say, Beckford would say, "Where are all your sorrows and your cares, ye gloomy souls! or where your pains and aches, ye complaining ones! one whimper has dispelled them all."

Mr. Jorrocks takes off his cap and urges the tail-hounds on. A few more driving shoots and stops, producing increased velocity with each effort, and a few more quick snatchy whimpers, end in an unanimous outburst of downrightly determined melody.

Jorrocks, cocking his cap on his ear, seats himself plump in his great saddle, and, gathering his reins, gallops after them in

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the full grin of delight. Away they tear up the ruddy grassy ride, as if it was a railway. "*F-o-o-r-rard on! F-o-o-r-rard on!*" is his cry.

"*H-o-i-c cry! h-o-i-c cry! h-o-i-c!*" squeaks Ben, wishing himself at home at the mutton, and delighted at having got rid of James Pigg, who always would have the first cut.

It is a long lane that never has a turn, and this one was no exception to the rule, for in due course it came to an abrupt angle. A convenient mense, however, inviting the fox onward, he abandoned the line and pursued his course over some bare, badly-fenced pastures, across which Mr. Jorrocks cheered and rode with all the confidence of a man who sees his way out. The pace mended as they went, and Jorrocks hugged himself with the idea of killing a fox without Pigg. From the pastures they got upon Straggleford Moor, pretty much the same sort of ground as the fields, but the fox brushing as he went, there was a still further improvement of scent. Jorrocks then began to bet himself hats that he'd kill him, and went vowing what he would offer to Diana if he did. There was scarcely any promise too wild for him to make at this moment. The fox, however, was not disposed to accommodate Jorrocks with much more plain sailing for the purpose, and seeing, by the scarlet coats, that he was not pursued by his old friends the Dotfield harriers as at first he thought, and with whom he had had many a game at romps, he presently sunk the hill and made for the stiffly-fenced vale below.

"Blow me tight!" exclaimed Jorrocks, shortening his hold of Arterxerxes, and putting his head straight as he used to do down the Surrey hills, "Blow me tight! but I wish he mayn't be gettin' me into grief. This looks to me werry like the Ingerleigh Wale, and if it is, it's a bit of as nasty ridin' grund as ever mortal man got into—yawnin' ditches with himpracticable fences, posts with rails of the most formidable order, and that nasty Long Tommy bruk, twistin' and twinin' about in all directions like a child's rattle-snake. 'Owever, thank goodness, 'ere's a gap and a gate beyond," continued he, as his quick eye caught a gap at the corner of the stubble-field he was

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now approaching, which getting through, he rose in his stirrups and cheered on the hounds in the line of the other convenience. "*For-r-a-r-d! for-r-a-r-d!*" shrieked he, pointing the now racing hounds out to Charley, who was a little behind; "*for-rard! for-rard!*" continued Jorrocks, rib-roasting Arterxerxes. The gate was locked, but Jackey—we beg his pardon—Mr. Jorrocks—was quickly off and, setting his great back against it, lifted it off the hinges. "*Go on! never mind me!*" cried he to Charley, who had pulled up as Jorrocks was dancing about with one foot in the stirrup, trying to remount.—"*Go on! never mind me!*" repeated he, with desperate energy, as he made another assault at the saddle. "Get on, Ben, you most useless appendage!" continued he, now lying across the saddle like a miller's sack. A few flounders land him in the desired haven, and he trots on, playing at catch-stirrup with his right foot as he goes.

"*Forrard on! forrard on!*" still screamed he, cracking his ponderous whip, though the hounds were running away from him as it was, but he wanted to get Charley Stobbs to the front, as there was no one to break his fences for him but him.

The hounds, who had been running with a breast-high scent, get their noses to the ground as they come upon fallow, and a few kicks, jags, and objurgations on Jorrocks's part soon bring Arterxerxes and him into the field in which they are. The scent begins to fail.

"*G-e-e-e-nt—ly* there!" cries Jorrocks, holding up his hand and reining in his horse, inwardly hoping the fox might be on instead of off to the right, where he sees his shiny friend, long Tommy, meandering smoothly along.

"*Yo dote!* Ravager, good dog, *yo dote*, Ravager!" cheers Jorrocks, as the sage feathers and scuttles up the furrow. "*Yo-o dote!*" continued Mr. Jorrocks, cheering the rest on—adding, as he looks at them scoring to cry, "Wot a petty it is we can't put new legs to old noses." The spurt, however, is of short duration, for the ground gets worse as it rises higher, until the tenderest-nosed hound can hardly own the scent. A

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heavy cloud, too, oppresses the atmosphere. Jorrocks sees if he doesn't look sharp he'll very soon be run out of scent, so getting hold of his hounds, he makes a rapid speculation in his mind as to which way he would go if he were the fox, and having decided that point he loses no time in getting the pack to the place.—Jorrocks is right!—Ravager's unerring nose proclaims the varmint across the green headland, and the next field being a clover ley, with a handy gate in, which indeed somewhat influenced Jorrocks in his cast, the hounds again settle to the scent, with Jorrocks rolling joyfully after them, declaring he'd be the best 'untsman under the sun if it warn't for the confounded lips. Away he now crams up the field road, with the hounds chirping merrily along on his right through turnips, oat stubble, winter beans, and plough. A white farm onstead, Buckwheat Grange, with its barking cur in a barrel, causes the fox to change his course and slip down a broken but grassy bank to the left. "Dash his impittance, but he's taken us into a most unmanageable country," observes Mr. Jorrocks, shading his eyes from the now out-bursting sun with his hand as he trotted on, eyeing the oft-occurring fences as he spoke. "Lost all idee of where I ham, and where I'm a-goin'," continued he, looking about to see if he could recognise anything. Hills, dales, woods, water, were equally new to him.

Crash! now go the hounds upon an old dead thorn-fence, stuck on a low sod-bank, making Jorrocks shudder at the sound. Over goes Stobbs without doing anything for his followers.

"*Go on, Binjimin! go on!* Now," cries Jorrocks, cantering up, cracking his whip, as if he wanted to take it in stride, but in reality to frighten Ben over to break it. "*Go on!* ye miserable man-monkey of a boy!" repeats he, as Xerxes now turned tail, nearly upsetting our master. "Oh you epitome of a tailor!" groaned Jorrocks; "you're of no more use wi' 'ounds than a lady's maid,—do believe I could make as good a wipper-in out of a carrot! See! you've set my quad a-refusin', and I'll bet a guinea 'at to a 'alf-crown wide-awake he'll not



PLAYING AT CATCH-STIRRUP.

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face another fence to-day—Come hup, I say, you hugly beast!” now roared Jorrocks, pretending to put Arterxerxes resolutely at it, but in reality holding him hard by the head. “Get off, ye useless apology of a hosier and pull it down, or I’ll give you sich a wopping as’ll send you to Blair Athol for the rest of the day,” exclaimed our half-distracted master, brandishing his flail of a whip as he spoke.

Ben gladly alighted, and by dint of pulling away the dead thorns, and scratching like a rabbit at the bank, he succeeded in greatly reducing the obstacle.

“Now, lead him over!” cried Mr. Jorrocks, applying his whip freely to Xerxes, and giving Ben a sly, accidental cut. Xerxes floundered over, nearly crushing Ben, and making plain sailing for Jorrocks. Our master then followed and galloped away, leaving Ben writhing and crying and vowing that he would “take and pull him off his ’oss.”

The hounds had now shot a few fields ahead, but a flashy, catching scent diminishing their pace, Mr. Jorrocks was soon back to them yoicking and holding them on. “*Yooi, over he goes!*” cheered he, taking off his cap, as Priestess endorsed Ranger’s promissory note on a very wet undrained fallow—“*Yooi, over he goes!*” repeated he, eyeing the fence into it, and calculating whether he could lead over or scuttle up to the white gate on the left in less time, and thinking the latter was safer, having got the hounds over, he rose in his stirrups, and pounded away while Charlie took the fence in his stride. They were now upon sound old pasture, lying parallel with tortuous Tommy, and most musical were the hounds’ notes as each in turn prevailed—Mr. Jorrocks had lit on his legs in the way of gates, and holloaed and rode as if he didn’t know what craning was.

“Forrard on, Priestess, old betch!” cheered he, addressing himself to the now leading hound, “Forrard on! forrard!” adding, “I’ll gie ye *sich* a plate o’ bones if we do but kill.”

On the hounds went bustling, chirping, and whimpering, all anxious to fly, but still not able to accomplish it. The scent was shifty and bad, sometimes serving them, and then as

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quickly failing, as if the fox had been coursed by a dog. Jorrocks, though desperately anxious to get them on better terms with their fox, trots gently on, anxiously eyeing them but restraining his ardour by repeating the old couplet—

“As well as shape full well he knows,
To *kill* their fox they must 'ave nose.”

“Aye, aye, but full well he knows also,” continued our master, after he had repeated the lines three or four times over, “that to kill their fox they must press 'im at some period or other o' the chase, which they don't seem at all inclined to do,” continued he, looking at their indifferent slack mode of proceeding. “*For-rard on!*” at length cries our master, cracking his whip at a group of dwellers, who seemed inclined to reassure every yard of the ground—“*For-rard on!*” repeated he, riding angrily at them, adding, “Cuss your unbelievin' 'eads, can't you trust old Priestess and Ravager?”

To increase our worthy master's perplexities, a formidable flock of sheep now wheel semicircularly over the line, completely obliterating any little scent that remained, and though our finest huntsman under the sun, aided by Charley as whip, quickly got the hounds beyond their foil, he was not successful in touching upon the line of the fox again.

“*Humph!*” grunted our master, reviewing his cast, “the ship must ha' heat 'im, or he's wanished into thin hair;” adding, “Jest put 'em on to me, Charley, whilst I makes one o' Mr. Craven Smith's patent all-round-my-'at-casts, for that beggar Binjimin's of no more use with a pack of 'ounds than a hopera-box would be to a cow, or a frilled shirt to a pig.” So saying, Mr. Jorrocks out with his tootler, and giving a shrill blast, seconded by Charley's whip, proceeded to go down wind, and up wind, and round about wind, without, however, feeling a touch of his fox. At length scarce a hound would stoop, and old black Lucifer gave unmistakable evidence of his opinion of matters by rolling himself just under Jorrocks's horse's nose, and uttering a long-drawn howl, as much as to say, “Come, old boy! shut up! it's no use bothering: let's off to dinner!”

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“Rot ye! ye great lumberin’ hēnterpriseless brute!” roared Jorrocks, cutting indignantly at him with his whip, “Rot ye! d’ye think I boards and lodges and pays tax ’pon you to ’ave ye settin’ up your ’olesale himperance that way?—*g-e-e-t-e* away, ye disgraceful sleepin’ partner o’ the chase!” continued he, as the frightened hound scuttled away with his tail between his legs.

“Well, it’s nine ’underd and fifty thousand petties,” muttered our master, now that the last of the stoopers had got up their heads, it’s nine ’underd and fifty thousand petties that I hadn’t got close away at his brush, for I’d ha’ killed ’im to a dead certainty. Never was a fox better ’unted than that. Science, patience, judgment, skill, everything that constitutes an ’untsman—Goodhall himself couldn’t ha’ done it better. But it’s not for mortals to command success,” sighed our now greatly dejected master.

END OF VOL. 1.

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